Entertainment Weekly

DEC. 4, 2015 • #1392

WILL **STAR WARS** JEDI-MIND-TRICK ITS WAY TO THE OSCARS?

THE 15 WHO ROCKED 2015

Jennifer Lawrence

Is Our

ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR

1 OSCAR, 2 HUGE FRANCHISES—AND SHE SWEARS LIKE A SAILOR

THAT'S WHY WE LOVE J-LAW!

Plus

CHRIS PRATT

TARAJI P. HENSON

ADELE

AZIZ ANSARI

AMY SCHUMER

and More!

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THE CAST OF
STRAIGHT OUTTA COMPTON
AND NICKI MINAJ
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THE **TOP 10** THINGS WE LOVE THIS WEEK

The Must List

▼Michael B. Jordan, Phylicia Rashad, Tessa Thompson, and Sylvester Stallone

BARRY WETCHER/WARNER BROS. (4)

1

MOVIES

CREED

• Rocky (Sylvester Stallone) is back, this time to impart wisdom on Adonis Johnson (Michael B. Jordan)—the scrappy son of Apollo Creed—in an exhilarating underdog story about two men grappling with legacy. *(PG-13)*

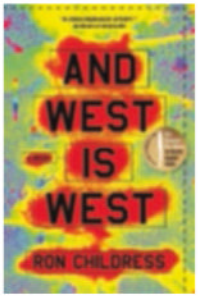
ILLUSTRATION BY **EDA AKALTUN**

The Must List

2 →

3 →

4 →



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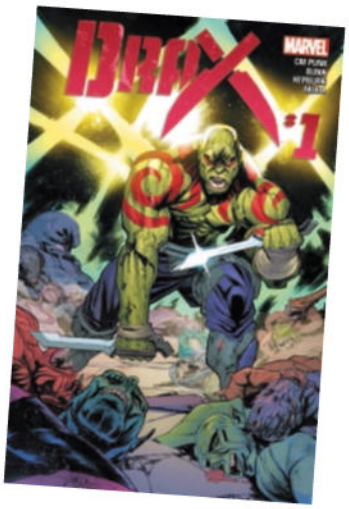

6 →

2 TV
FLESH AND BONE

• Equal parts entrancing and disturbing, this drama from *Breaking Bad* writer Moira Walley-Beckett delves, no holds barre-d, into the turbulent lives of ballet dancers. *(Starz, 8 p.m., Sundays)*

3 BOOKS
DEAR MR. YOU, by Mary-Louise Parker

• The Emmy winner's long-awaited memoir takes an unconventional form: beautifully written letters to the men in her life, including her father, several thinly veiled exes, and a cabdriver she once had a fight with.

4 BOOKS
AND WEST IS WEST, by Ron Childress

• This compelling debut novel tracks a young Air Force drone pilot and a rookie Wall Street suit who both become scapegoats for terrible events.

5 COMICS
NOVA and DRAX

• A pair of new Marvel monthlies go intergalactic: *Nova* is a superhuman father-son drama, while *Drax* tracks the travels of *Guardians of the Galaxy*'s least subtle vengeance seeker.

6 MOVIES
MUSTANG

• Deniz Gamze Ergüven's powerful first film follows five teenage sisters in Turkey, locked away by their repressive family and rebelling against expectations of marriage. *(PG-13)*

FLESH AND BONE: PATRICK HARBRON/STARZ; PARKER: ILYA S. SAVENOK/GETTY IMAGES; *AND WEST IS WEST*: ALGONQUIN PUBLISHING; *DRAX*: MARVEL; *MUSTANG*: COHEN MEDIA GROUP

YESTERDAY. TOMORROW. TODAY

Mornings on NBC

7 →

8 →

9 →

10 →

7

MUSIC

"WTF," Missy Elliott

• Missy's latest video has everything: diamond lip gloss, hoverboards, and Pharrell Williams as a marionette!

8

TV

THE CHALLENGE: BATTLE OF THE BLOODLINES

• This season, the biggest challenges the band of MTV regulars face are their family members! *(MTV, 10 p.m., Wednesdays)*

9

VINE

RUTH B

• It took just six seconds for the Vine star to win us over with her velvety vocals, which is why her debut EP feels like an early holiday treat.

10

TV

THE LEFTOVERS

• The existential drama is even darker in its impressive second season, thanks to exciting new characters like Regina King's Erika. *(HBO, 9 p.m., Sundays)*

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THE WIZ LIVE!

Ease on down the road to Oz!

Join Queen Latifah, Mary J. Blige, David Alan Grier, Ne-Yo and many, many more for an epic night of stars, spectacle and song!

THURS DEC 3 · 8/7c NBC

THE CHALLENGE: BATTLE OF THE BLOODLINES: MTV; RUTH B: SONY; *THE LEFTOVERS*: VAN REDIN/HBO

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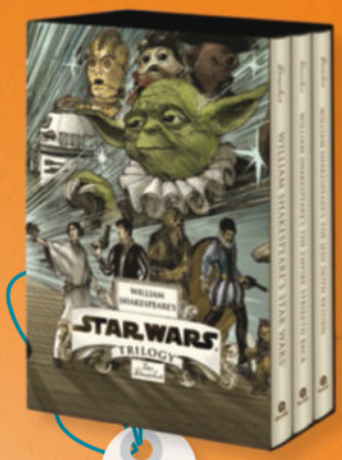
#GiveaBook This Holiday Season

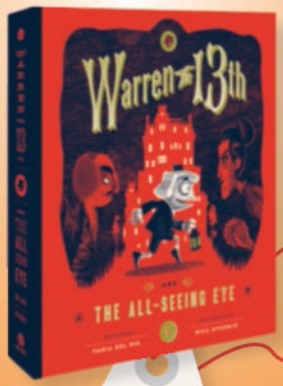
"An adorable new picture book…kids can read about Kevin McAllister saving his home every night at bedtime." (EW.com)

"Readers searching for the next Harry Potter may want to visit Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children." (CNN)



"A great, geeky, inter-galactic goblet of literary fun." *(American Profile)*

"An alphabetical guide to…the eccentric actor, and it's a pretty absorbing read." *(Washington Post)*



"Wwonderfully cloaked in a Victorian sensibility and design, a bit of Edward Gorey, a bit of Tim Burton." *(Shelf Awareness)*

"Read it cover to cover, and then make sure you share it with all the young girl geeks you know." (Brit + Co)

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BY TIM STACK

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We celebrate the 15 artists who ruled pop culture this year, from Hollywood's most bankable actress (Jennifer Lawrence) to TV's undisputed queen of one-liners (Taraji P. Henson) to the big-screen hunk who has us roaring (Chris Pratt).

45
Holiday Gift Guide
'Tis the season to celebrate who you love...and what they love. We found 50 out-of-this-world presents for every pop culture fan on your list. May the gift-giving force be with you.
BY STEPHANIE SCHOMER

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Jennifer Lawrence, our 2015 Entertainer of the Year

GOWN: RUBIN & CHAPELLE

ON THE COVER
Jennifer Lawrence photographed exclusively for EW by Robert Trachtenberg on Sept. 8, 2015, in Los Angeles

STYLING: JILL LINCOLN AND JORDAN JOHNSON/THE WALL GROUP; HAIR: JENNY CHO/SUAVE PROFESSIONALS/THE WALL GROUP; MAKEUP: JILLIAN DEMPSEY/DIOR/STARWORKS ARTISTS; MANICURE: JENNA HIPP/NAILING HOLLYWOOD; SET DESIGN: WARD ROBINSON/WOODEN LADDER; DRESS: NILI LOTAN

PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBERT TRACHTENBERG

THE WEEK'S BEST

Sound Bites

TWEET OF THE WEEK
DINNERTIME FOOD IDEAS FROM MY SON "Can we put Nutella on our salmon and call it salmonella?" This has been DINNERTIME FOOD IDEAS FROM MY SON
@Ken Jennings

"It's like kissing someone who's drunk. It doesn't count."
—Gale (Liam Hemsworth), following a prebattle smooch from Katniss (Jennifer Lawrence), in *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay—Part 2*

"Son, I could fill a steamer trunk with the amount of stupid I think you are."
—Hank (Ted Danson), telling Dodd (Jeffrey Donovan) exactly what he thinks about his IQ level, on *Fargo*

"I'm building a body of work. I'm following in the path of my Christmas heroes: the Grinch, the Sticky Bandits, Hans Gruber from *Die Hard*."
—Rebecca (Ilana Glazer), explaining her holiday-sabotaging ways, in *The Night Before*

"Do you think Angelina went into *Mr. & Mrs. Smith* with that kind of attitude?"
—Paula (Donna Lynne Champlin), trying to persuade Rebecca (Rachel Bloom) to crash Josh's (Vincent Rodriguez III) family dinner, on *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend*

"I don't think there's ever been a more elegant and classy performance of a song about a booty call in the history of music."
—Blake Shelton, complimenting contestant Amy Vachal's rendition of Drake's "Hotline Bling," on *The Voice*

"Help me, Zombie-Wan Kenobi. You're our only hope."
—Blaine (David Anders), asking for Liv's (Rose McIver) assistance, on *iZombie*

"Who would Danny be a stunt double for? Anna Kendrick?"
—Peter (Adam Pally), reacting to Mindy's (Mindy Kaling) made-up story that Danny (Chris Messina) died in a film accident, on *The Mindy Project*

JENNINGS: BEN HIDER/GETTY IMAGES; DANSON: CHRIS LARGE/FX; HEMSWORTH: MURRAY CLOSE; GLAZER: SARAH SHATZ; CHAMPLIN: SMALLZ & RASKIND/THE CW; SHELTON: TRAE PATTON/NBC; ANDERS: DIYAH PERA/THE CW; PALLY: JORDIN ALTHAUS/UNIVERSAL TELEVISION

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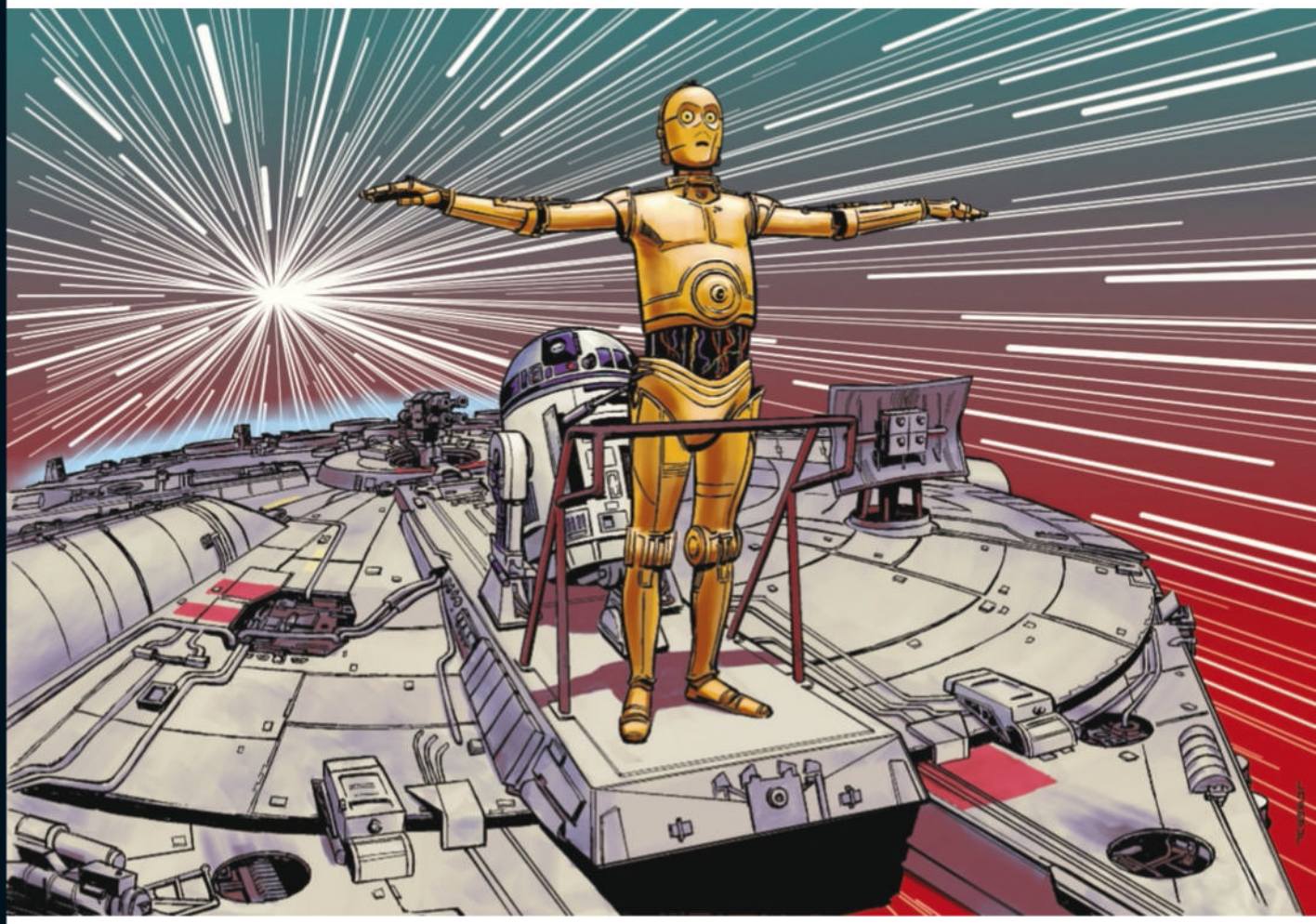


CAN *STAR WARS* BE THE NEW *TITANIC*?

The Force Awakens is destined to be a smash at the box office—and it just might be the king of the Academy's world, too. By Nicole Sperling

WHEN *STAR WARS:* *The Force Awakens* opens on Dec. 18, many questions will be answered: Where is Luke Skywalker? Why is Princess Leia a general? What's Han Solo been up to? How much money can a movie *actually* make? But perhaps the most pressing mystery for the J.J. Abrams-directed spectacle, which could gross north of $600 million worldwide in its opening weekend: Does it have *real* Oscar potential? "There's no reason to rule it out," says an Oscar consultant. "It could win more than any other film."

Should it captivate the globe as expected while also exploring themes like self-discovery and rebirth—as Abrams has promised—it could be too big a cultural

ILLUSTRATION BY **LÆMEUR**

touch point to ignore in the major categories. In fact, *The Force Awakens* has plenty in common with James Cameron's epic *Titanic*, a late-breaking, under-estimated phenomenon that destroyed everything in its path 18 years ago, earning $600 million in the U.S. and nabbing 11 Oscars, including Best Picture and Director.

To get to the Oscar stage, *The Force Awakens* has to overcome obstacles greater than some measly iceberg. The movie can't just be good—it has to be amazing. There may be no front-runner in this year's Best Picture race, but that just means more competition. In 2009, when the Academy expanded the category from 5 nominees to up to 10, the intention was to recognize blockbusters—enough to make the general public actually care about the Oscars. Instead, a trend of nominating well-made but smaller indie films emerged.

This year, to the Academy's delight, commercial hits *The Martian*, *Mad Max: Fury Road*, and *Straight Outta Compton*—films that mixed spectacle with cultural relevance—are making a play for the race. Add *The Force Awakens*, and it gets interesting. For the first time in a long while, the category may include a broad range of titles, with quieter, well-received movies also vying for love (*Spotlight*, *Brooklyn*) and many anticipated flicks yet to debut (Alejandro G. Iñárritu's *The Revenant*, David O. Russell's *Joy*, and Quentin Tarantino's *The Hateful Eight*).

Competition aside, the bigger challenge could be that the Academy rarely recognizes a sequel. When George Lucas' original space odyssey debuted in 1977, it was nominated for 10 Oscars (see sidebar), including Best Picture. The trophy proved elusive, and the saga would never again see a Best Picture nom. In fact, with the exception of the *Godfather* series and the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, sequels *never* land in the race. "The Academy doesn't give points for extending a narrative," says another Oscar consultant. "Taking existing characters and extrapolating on them doesn't win."

The Oscars aren't the only awards game in town, however. The American Film Institute announced on Nov. 17 that it will push back its year-end ranking to allow *The Force Awakens* to be considered, a move that suggests it's taking the film seriously. Like everyone else, they're eager to see if Abrams and company have the goods to best *Titanic*'s record. And that answer will only come in time, young Padawan.

Alec Guinness and director George Lucas on set of *A New Hope*

STAR WARS AT THE OSCARS

From a galaxy's worth of Oscar love to technical recognition only, we tally the saga's Academy Awards history

EPISODE IV: A NEW HOPE

6 wins (Art Direction, Costume Design, Sound, Film Editing, Visual Effects, Score) out of **10 nominations** (Picture, Director, and Original Screenplay for George Lucas; Supporting Actor for Alec Guinness); Special Achievement Award for Ben Burtt for the "creation of the alien, creature, and robot voices"

EPISODE V: THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

1 win (Sound) out of **3 nominations** (Art Direction, Original Score); Special Achievement Award for Visual Effects

EPISODE VI: RETURN OF THE JEDI

4 nominations (Art Direction, Sound, Sound Effects Editing, Original Score); Special Achievement Award for Visual Effects

EPISODE I: THE PHANTOM MENACE

3 nominations (Sound, Sound Effects Editing, Visual Effects)

EPISODE II: ATTACK OF THE CLONES

1 nomination (Visual Effects)

EPISODE III: REVENGE OF THE SITH

1 nomination (Makeup)

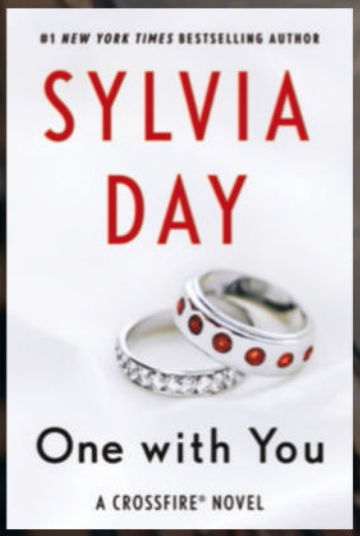
HIGHEST-GROSSING BEST PICTURE WINNERS*

1	Titanic 1997	$600.8M
2	The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King 2003	$377M
3	Forrest Gump 1994	$329.7M
4	Gladiator 2000	$187.7M
5	Dances With Wolves 1990	$184.2M
6	Rain Man 1988	$172.8M
7	A Beautiful Mind 2001	$170.7M
8	Chicago 2002	$170.7M
9	Slumdog Millionaire 2008	$141.3M
10	Platoon 1986	$138.5M

*DOMESTIC BOX OFFICE, SOURCE: BOX OFFICE MOJO

STAR WARS: EPISODE IV—A NEW HOPE: © & TM LUCASFILM, LTD.; TITANIC: MERIE WEISMILLER WALLACE

EVA AND GIDEON RETURN



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STANDING WITH PARIS

AN ACT OF SOLIDARITÉ

How one musician's rendition of a John Lennon classic helped comfort a city overwhelmed by grief. **By Chris Lee**

ON NOV. 13, TERRORIST GUNMEN BURST into the Bataclan concert hall during a performance by California rock outfit Eagles of Death Metal, killing 89 people in the deadliest attack on France since World War II. (In a statement, the band described themselves as "horrified and trying to come to terms with what happened" and "bonded in grief with the victims.")

Later, at 2:00 a.m., German street musician Davide Martello made the "spontaneous decision" to travel 400 miles through the back roads of southern Germany to the City of Light, hoping to offer peace in the wake of senseless violence by playing a simple song to soothe the anguish and confusion. He set up a grand piano outside the Bataclan and performed a street-side rendition of John Lennon's signature 1971 anthem "Imagine" for hundreds of mourners. He found a receptive audience—both in Paris and worldwide—seeking togetherness in the wake of tragedy.

"Playing that song was very deep, a crazy moment," says Martello, 34. "I was upset... and the images of the blood on the ground were all in my head." As to why he chose that particular song? The lyrics "speak to the time we're in now," Martello says, citing the famous refrain: "Imagine there's no countries/It isn't hard to do/Nothing to kill or die for/And no religion, too."

In the following days, the musician, who also performs under the name Klavierkunst and has a history of socially engaged

▶ The Eiffel Tower illuminated with the French national colors

In Memoriam

The attacks at the Bataclan concert hall claimed the lives of several of the entertainment industry's own

THOMAS AYAD, 32

▶International product manager for Mercury Records (Universal Music Group)
Born in Amiens, France, Ayad grew up an avid music fan and became a respected executive within the industry he so loved, working with artists including Keith Richards and Justin Bieber, who posted tributes to Ayad on social media. "I wish I would've had more time to thank him," Bieber wrote. "Thanks Thomas for everything you did for me."

MARIE MOSSER, 24

▶Marketer for Universal Music Group
Mosser worked in digital marketing and communication for UMG and Mercury Records, and she, along with Ayad, worked closely in France with members of the Vamps. The British band paid tribute to both on Facebook, writing, "They will be sorely missed by us and all that knew them."

MANUEL PÉREZ PAREDES, 40

▶Former marketer for Universal Music Group
The marketing executive, who held dual French-Spanish citizenship, posted a photo on Facebook on Friday thanking his former co-worker Ayad for tickets to the Eagles of Death Metal show. Paredes' girlfriend, Précilia Correia, was also killed in the attacks.

NICK ALEXANDER, 36

▶Merch manager for Eagles of Death Metal
The British citizen and longtime merch manager toured with bands such as Panic! At the Disco and Sum 41, and news of his death sparked emotional tributes from musicians like Fall Out Boy's Joe Trohman and the Black Keys' Dan Auerbach and Patrick Carney.

MARTELLO: KENZO TRIBOUILLARD/AFP/GETTY IMAGES; EIFFEL TOWER: BERTRAND GUAY/AFP/GETTY IMAGES; SHEEN: PETER KRAMER/NBC/NBCU PHOTO BANK VIA GETTY IMAGES; *HOW TO GET AWAY WITH MURDER*: MITCH HAASETH/ABC

◀ Davide Martello

concerts, hitched his piano to a bicycle and pedaled around Paris to play "Imagine" at all six locations where ISIS-affiliated terrorists massacred a total of 129 victims. Everywhere he went, it seemed, Martello's music struck a chord of unity. "The Parisians around me were singing," the pianist says. "They were very thankful, shouting, 'Merci! Merci! Merci!' And it was a feeling like, for a little moment, you forget what happened." You may say he's a dreamer. But he's not the only one.

Reporting by Nina Biddle

GUILLAUME B. DECHERF, 43

▸**Music critic for *Les Inrocks***
Throughout his career as a music writer, Decherf not only covered rock bands for the French culture magazine *Les Inrocks* but also edited the Paris-based *Hard Rock Mag* and wrote for outlets like *Rolling Stone*. Known as a humorous and dedicated journalist, Decherf attended the Eagles of Death Metal concert at the Bataclan after reviewing the band's LP. He is survived by his partner and two daughters.

For the latest news in entertainment, tune in to **EW MORNING LIVE** with Dalton Ross and Jessica Shaw every weekday (SiriusXM 105, 8–10 a.m.)

HOLLYWOOD'S NEW HIV CONVERSATION

Charlie Sheen's public confession—and an unprecedented prime-time story line—is helping to end the stigma that still surrounds the oft-misunderstood disease. **By James Hibberd**

•••

Say what you will about Charlie Sheen, but the actor's decision to reveal that he is HIV-positive has had at least one benefit: It's helped spark a long-overdue conversation about living with the diagnosis. During an interview with Matt Lauer on *Today*, Sheen not only went public about his health but also had the opportunity to explain that he can have unprotected sex—provided he follow an antiretroviral regimen and his partners use protective PrEP drugs—a news flash for people unaware of the latest treatment options.

"America's knowledge of HIV is caught back in the '90s," says Michael Kaplan, president and CEO of AIDS United. "And there have been substantial changes in the last five years in terms of opportunities to end this epidemic."

But it's not just Sheen's admission that has Hollywood talking. ABC's hit series *How to Get Away With Murder* recently made mainstream TV history by depicting an ongoing relationship between HIV-positive and -negative characters Oliver and Connor (Conrad Ricamora and Jack Falahee). "It's groundbreaking," Falahee said of his *HTGAWM* arc at a Paley Center panel in New York earlier this month. "This is something millions of people are dealing with, and in some small way to spread knowledge about how to talk to a partner is a great honor."

Looking back a few decades, it's not unlike when Rock Hudson smooched Linda Evans on *Dynasty*, which helped dispel the myth that HIV was spread through kissing. By comparison, Sheen is perhaps the least coveted poster boy for any good cause (wanting to halt blackmailers threatening to reveal his status is hardly a noble motive), but experts say that doesn't matter. "We're all imperfect spokespeople," Kaplan says. "Nobody has that perfect story."

▲ (From top) Charlie Sheen; Jack Falahee and Conrad Ricamora

OFF TO SEE *THE WIZ LIVE!*

Four decades after the smash Oz musical stormed Broadway, NBC preps a super-starry TV update. EW eased on down the road for an exclusive set visit. ***By Tim Stack***

VIRGINIA SHERWOOD/NBC (3)

TYPICALLY, ENTRY INTO THE land of Oz requires hopping aboard a Kansas twister. But on this November afternoon, the most recent adaptation of L. Frank Baum's magical story of witches, wizards, Munchkins, and denizens of an elaborate Emerald City exists just an hour outside Manhattan, on a Bethpage, Long Island, soundstage. The cast and crew of NBC's upcoming *The Wiz Live!* (airing Dec. 3) are rehearsing the latest installment in the network's annual franchise of live musical productions. Singer Ne-Yo—who's playing the Tin Man but today is casually dressed in gym clothes—hangs from the side of a large metal heap, grunting. Dorothy (played by newcomer Shanice Williams) and the Scarecrow (*Hairspray*'s Elijah Kelley) follow the yellow brick road to offer an assist. With a few strategic squirts from an oilcan, the Tin Man soon limbers up and performs "Slide Some Oil to Me." He's even loose enough for a little pop 'n' lock, breathing fresh energy into the 1975 Broadway triumph, which, at the time, was one of the first mainstream musicals to boast an entirely African-American cast.

Dusting off popular musical properties and infusing them with new life is a trademark of Craig Zadan and Neil Meron, the show's executive producers and the duo behind the big-screen musical versions of *Hairspray* and *Chicago*, as well as the TV events *The Sound of Music Live!* (2013) and *Peter Pan Live!* (2014). While *Music* was a blockbuster ratings hit, von Trapping 18.5 million viewers thanks to its family-friendly title and Carrie Underwood as Maria, *Pan* disappointed with just 9.2 million viewers and criticisms over a meandering plot and star Christopher Walken's hammy acting. "We discovered there wasn't as much interest in Peter Pan as we thought there would be," admits Meron. "Also, the star-driven nature of these events is something that's a big motor." Zadan adds: "What we learned is we wanted to do something that was cooler and hipper and contemporary. And something that had a lot of stars."

Thankfully, the road to Oz can be paved with both yellow brick and a plethora of talent. The original musical not only nabbed seven Tony Awards (and was adapted into a 1978 film starring Diana Ross and Michael Jackson) but also inspired an upcoming generation of performers, helping this reimagining land a seriously celeb-heavy ensemble, including Queen Latifah (the Wiz), Mary J. Blige (the Wicked Witch of the West), Uzo Aduba (Good Witch Glinda), Common (Emerald City's gatekeeper), and David Alan Grier (the Cowardly Lion). "It's one of the first plays I'd ever seen," says Latifah. "My mom took me as a kid, and it just blew my mind. To see people who looked like me and had my color skin, my body type. People who looked like my aunts and my uncles and people I knew—black people. I had never seen anything like it."

In a remarkable year for diversity on TV, with massive hits like *Empire* and *black-ish*, the fact that a major network is

▲ (Clockwise from top) Queen Latifah as the Wiz; Ne-Yo, David Alan Grier, Elijah Kelley, Shanice Williams, and Common; Uzo Aduba and Williams

> **THIS IS ON SUPERDRIVE IN TERMS OF STAR CALIBER. WE WANT PEOPLE TO NOTICE *THE WIZ*."**
> *—EP Neil Meron*

championing an all-black musical is not lost on the cast. "Everybody knows about the unspoken stigma [of race] in Hollywood," says Ne-Yo, who also co-wrote an original song, "We Got It," for the production. "It's one thing to talk about it and how wrong it is, and it's another to actually do something to show you're not about that. And that's what NBC is doing."

And there are even more ambitious goals for *The Wiz* in the works—a Broadway revival is being planned for late 2016, involving *The Wiz Live!*'s creative team, including director Kenny Leon (*A Raisin in the Sun*), choreographer Fatima Robinson (*Dreamgirls*), and, hopefully, the show's star Shanice Williams, who Leon discovered at an open casting call. *The Wiz* is the 19-year-old's first professional gig, and she still can't quite believe she's here. "I never thought I'd be doing anything like this," she says during a rehearsal break. "It's always been my dream to be on Broadway." And has there ever been a city more perfectly suited for dreams to come true than Oz? ◆

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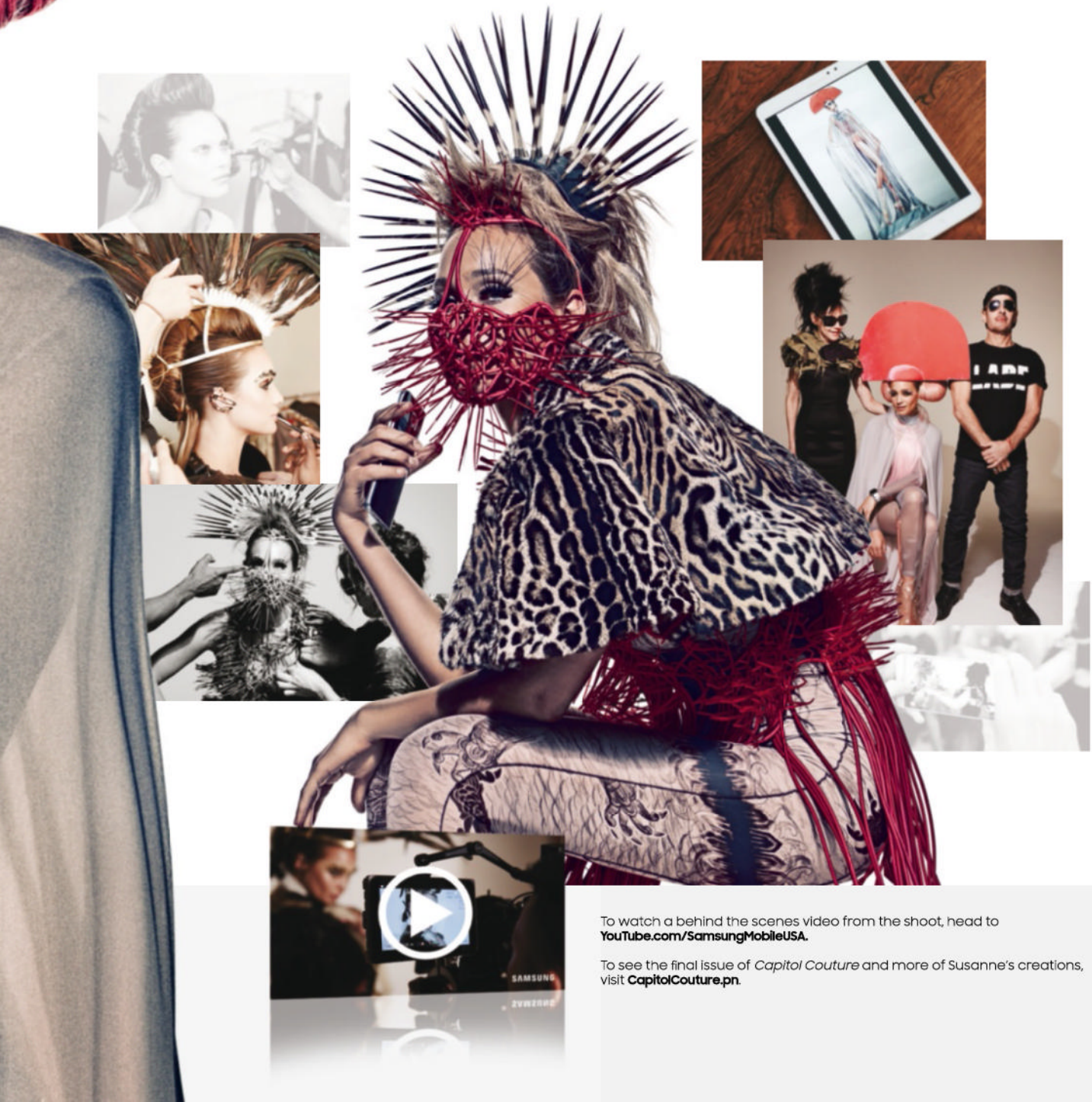


To watch a behind the scenes video from the shoot, head to **YouTube.com/SamsungMobileUSA.**

To see the final issue of *Capitol Couture* and more of Susanne's creations, visit **CapitolCouture.pn**.

Jennifer Lawrence photographed on Sept. 8, 2015, in Los Angeles

2015

ENTERTAINERS *of the* YEAR

STARRING

JENNIFER LAWRENCE

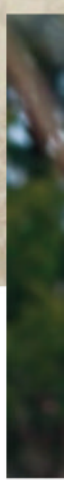
At just 25, she's both an Oscar winner and Hollywood's most bankable actress. Now, as she bids farewell to Katniss and hello to her most adult role yet in next month's *Joy*, Jennifer Lawrence is discovering her own power. And she's done playing games.

***By Sara Vilkomerson** @Vilkomerson*

Photographs by Robert Trachtenberg

PLUS: 14 More Who Deserve to Take a Bow

Including... The voice who cuts through all the noise: ***Adele*** • The undisputed queen of one-liners: ***Taraji P. Henson*** • The big-screen hunk who has us roaring: ***Chris Pratt*** • That master of everything: ***Aziz Ansari*** • ***and more***



JENNIFER LAWRENCE ENTERS A DOWNTOWN NEW YORK hotel bar with a cheery wave to the bartender. "I was over-served last night!" she mock-angrily shouts, and then flops dramatically onto a sofa with a grin. Lawrence is that celebrity rarity—as effervescent, irreverent, and charming as she appears through the lens of talk shows, red carpets, and acceptance speeches. "She's also frighteningly brilliant," says the comedian and actor Amy Schumer, a close friend of Lawrence's, with whom she is co-writing a comedy script. "She's the funniest, smartest person. It is crazy that she's so young." ¶ Yes, it does feel as though Lawrence, at 25, has already lived a few Hollywood lives. Beginning with her remarkable, Oscar-nominated breakout in 2010's gritty *Winter's Bone*, she's kept busy over the past five years with box-office-busting franchises (*The Hunger Games*: *Mockingjay—Part 2* hits theaters Nov. 20; her last turn as Mystique in the X-Men series will be released in May 2016), but in between she managed to sneak in a couple of David O. Russell films: 2012's *Silver Linings Playbook*, for which she took home the Best Actress Oscar, and 2013's *American Hustle*, which garnered her a third nomination. This Christmas she and Russell have teamed up again for *Joy*, the story of one woman's rise to power and wealth that unfolds over four decades. "Jen's the same person, this girl from Kentucky who is becoming a woman," Russell says. "I've gotten the privilege of watching that. That's also the story of this movie. It's a lot for a 25-year-old. But it's happening. Jennifer is really finding her own voice." Some would argue she's found it already.

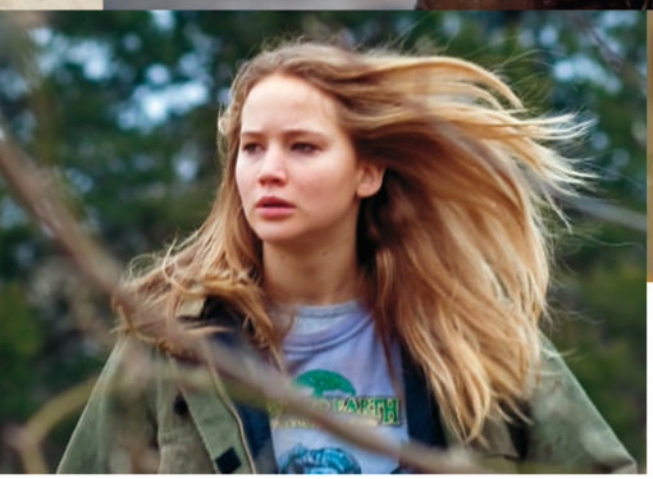
› ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY You're taking a break from filming the sci-fi adventure *Passengers* with Chris Pratt to promote the final *Hunger Games* all over the globe, and then you're going straight back to set. Don't you need a break?

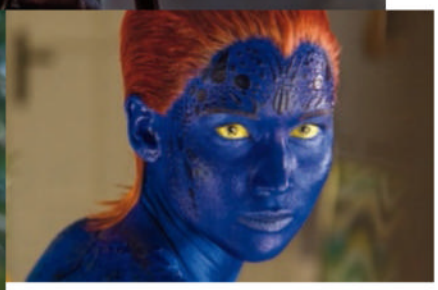
JENNIFER LAWRENCE Do I? I really, *really* love acting, and it makes me really happy. Waking up without a purpose and going to sleep without achieving anything—like what other people call vacation or time off—makes me depressed.

› Does leaving something like *The Hunger Games* after five years feel like college graduation?

Even when you're in college, you don't spend the kind of

(PREVIOUS SPREAD) STYLING: JILL LINCOLN AND JORDAN JOHNSON/THE WALL GROUP; HAIR: JENNY CHO/SUAVE PROFESSIONALS/THE WALL GROUP; MAKEUP: JILLIAN DEMPSEY; DIOR/STARWORKS ARTISTS; MANICURE: JENNA HIPP/NAILING HOLLYWOOD; SET DESIGN: WARD ROBINSON/WOODEN LADDER; DRESS: NILI LOTAN; COAT: ACNE





(Clockwise from far left) Lawrence in December's *Joy*; *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay—Part 1*; *X-Men: Days of Future Past*; *Winter's Bone*

(THIS SPREAD) *JOY*: COURTESY 20TH CENTURY FOX; *THE HUNGER GAMES: MOCKINGJAY—PART 1*: MURRAY CLOSE; *WINTER'S BONE*: SEBASTIAN MLYNARSKI; *X-MEN: DAYS OF FUTURE PAST*: ALAN MARKFIELD

time we all spend together on set—by week 1 you're scraping the bottom of the normal barrel of things to talk about. There's just crazy s--- you would never tell anybody but you do because you're sitting on a set together for 16 hours a day. Josh [Hutcherson], Liam [Hemsworth], Woody [Harrelson]—we *know* each other. These people know more about me than anybody on the planet! So it's bizarre for it to end. It does feel over. It didn't for a while and I didn't think it would ever sink in, but it has now. It feels over. And that's okay. It's okay to move on.

› **You can't play the same character for your whole life.**

No, it would be boring, and that wouldn't be fair to the most incredible character in the entire world.

› **Now that you've completed *Hunger Games* and shooting on next year's *X-Men: Apocalypse*, you're finished with your franchise responsibilities. How does that feel?**

It's crazy. I signed on to these projects when I was 20 years old. I remember being like, "Oh my God, I'm going to be 25 [when I'm finished]." It seemed so far away. It's weird to think I have to start working with directors who aren't David O. Russell and [*Hunger Games* director] Francis Lawrence, who is the nicest man in the world and a perfect director.

› **It doesn't seem likely that *Joy* will be your last David O. Russell movie.**

No. David and I will never ever ever *ever* not do movies together. I love him so much that sometimes I can't talk about him without tearing up. Look! I'm tearing up. I understand every look, every eyeball move, every word he says or doesn't say. We were made for each other.

› ***Joy* follows your character over four decades. It's also the second film you've made with Russell where you've played a mother.**

Isn't that weird? With David it's just like—we've always known I'm too young for this character, this character, or this character. But we can't not work together. He'll do the same thing when I'm 50—if he wants me to play a high schooler, I'll just do it. Don't tell me I can't! [*Laughs*] People are mad about it now, just wait for the reverse.

› ***Joy* is all about a young woman who rises to great power at an early age and then has to deal with life after success. Did you see any parallels between your own success and your character's?**

What's funny about patterns,

> "I have wanted to direct as long as I've wanted to act; I just don't talk about it because I'd rather just do it."

or parallels, is that if you realize it while you're making it, it almost makes it less authentic. David and I focused on this character: She's smart, she's creative, she's funny, she's powerful, she's strong. She rises to being a matriarch and running a multibillion-dollar business, and the brutality and ruthlessness that goes into it. And what does it mean when you have everything that you've worked for? Now it's easy to look back and say, "Oh, there are actual parallels," but we didn't see that on that day. I think it's better that way. I would never compare a character to myself. I've never ever felt they were related.

› It's a fascinating idea to explore: What comes *after* you've achieved success?

I can speak from personal experience: People start to feel a lot less guilty when you become bigger or have more money. People feel less guilty taking from you because it's like stealing a Snickers from Duane Reade [drugstore]. People forget about the personal drain or attack that you feel.

› What does that do to you when it comes to your personal life?

I have a very small circle. The moment I feel like someone is using me or is in it for the wrong reasons, I have zero guilt about just cutting them the f--- out of my life. My bulls--- detector is phenomenal. None of my friends bulls--- me. Everything in my life has to be real.

"David O. Russell and I will never ever ever *ever* not do movies together. I love him so much that sometimes I can't talk about him without tearing up."

COAT: LANVIN

Two newer friends are Amy Schumer and her sister, Kim Caramele, with whom you are writing a screenplay.
I'm seeing them tonight, I can't wait! They are the funniest motherf---ers that ever lived. They're brilliant writers, too. And fast! The script is pretty much good to go. We work really well together—it's been the most fun thing ever. All I do is laugh. Amy and I play sisters, and we go on a road trip to reconnect with our brother and...there's a twist. It's really hilarious, and it's incredibly offensive. I've already come up with the tagline for the movie that can go on the posters: "Minorities will be offended, and so will all white people."

Is writing something you'd like to keep doing? How do you see your career proceeding?
I'd like to write some stuff that I'm not acting in, too. I want to get back to acting in small, dark stuff. I want to get back into indies. I'd also like to direct a comedy. I have wanted to direct as long as I've wanted to act; I just don't talk about it because I'd rather just do it.

When do you think you'll direct?
I guess after the Amy movie. I've signed on to direct something called *Project Delirium*—it's based on this article about mental warfare in the '60s, like an acid experiment gone terribly wrong. It's funny, I've wanted to direct since I was 16 and always thought I should start making steps towards that. If I had tried to do it earlier, I wouldn't have been ready. Now I actually feel ready.

In October you penned an essay on pay inequality in Hollywood in the newsletter *Lenny*, writing candidly about your own struggles within the industry. Was there any backlash?
Some news show called my essay a "bratty display," and I was like, *Thank you for proving my point*. Would you have called a man a brat? I was very clear: My problems are not relatable. This is not about money. I don't need money, I have plenty of money, I'm already overpaid. What I was trying to write about was how my own mentality was getting in my own way and [in that respect] it doesn't matter what your salary is.

It's important for other women who aren't in your public position to hear this. It's hard for women to realize they need to be their own advocates.
It is harder for a woman to be blunt than a man. It just is. We're not victims because we have vaginas—we need to push through that idea. I feel that way. I feel like I've stopped all that bulls---. I say exactly what I mean. I can see that it takes people aback at first, but then they see that's how you operate: straightforwardly. It's about being assertive with your voice and not being ashamed.

Between that essay, writing scripts, and planning to direct, it seems like you're really taking the reins of your career.
I just want to be... I don't want to be... [*Long pause*] Yes, thank you. [*Laughs*] I am trying this new *crazy* thing where when I know I'm going to regret saying something, I just try not to say it.

I've heard you worrying about what you say and self-censoring—which, frankly, seems like a shame.
It's like, everyone is listening. It's just crazy that it's a part of my job. Why can't I just act? Why does it even matter if you like me?

You shouldn't let it alter your personality—don't tamp yourself down! Speak your mind!
Okay. [*Pauses*] Let's talk about dildos. ◆

CHRIS PRATT

HOLLYWOOD'S HOTTEST HUNK HAD THE SUMMER'S BIGGEST MOVIE SMASH, BUT SUCCESS HASN'T GONE TO HIS HEAD

Jurassic World took in $1.67 billion worldwide. Here, its 36-year-old star shares how a newly minted A-lister avoids D-bag status.

● **What's your secret to maintaining good-guy status while getting ahead?**
When I first moved to L.A. maybe 15 years ago, I remember hearing this small voice in my head warning me to not become an a--hole. "Don't come across as a douche." That's something that's important to me. And really takes effort. I mean, my douche-meter is going off right now just talking about this stuff.

● **As you've become more famous, do you feel a greater pull toward the dark side?**
I think as your star grows and your influence grows, people are reticent to call you on your bulls---. Perspective is a difficult thing to maintain going through this ride. I mean, my douche-meter is going off again, like, "Aww, poor me."

● **You had the No. 1-grossing movie this year, but you also said goodbye to *Parks and Recreation*. How hard was that transition?**
Both are huge moments. Doing a TV show is like adopting a dog: It's definitely worth it, but you know that someday it's going to die. But it's better to have loved and lost. I loved being on *Parks and Rec*. We're still going through withdrawal. We've got a text chain going almost every day.

● **After your huge 2015, could next year be even bigger?**
I'm excitable, but my excitement level's been maxed out for years, even just being able to be an actor and not having to have another job. I can't even feel anything more. —*Keith Staskiewicz*

Adele

BUST OUT THE KLEENEX: THE GRAMMY-WINNING GIRL WITH THE GOLDEN VOICE RETURNED (FINALLY!) WITH THE YEAR'S BEST ALBUM OF LOVE, LOSS, AND HEARTBREAK

WHEN ADELE MYSTERIOUSLY TEASED a snippet of her comeback single "Hello" during a commercial break for U.K.'s *The X Factor* in October, she was initially fearful no one cared about her return. She told *The New York Times* that as she was monitoring Twitter, she was thinking, "Oh, no, I've missed my window.... The comeback's gone. No one cares." She couldn't have been more wrong. Since the release of that anthem—and her third album, *25*, weeks later—the 27-year-old British siren has broken sales and video-streaming records. The frenzy around her return is sure to dominate much of 2016, too. So what is it about Adele that has gripped the globe? As pop icons Michael Jackson and Whitney Houston showed, great songs about universal themes certainly help. Not to mention that voice. But the Grammy and Oscar winner also seems like one of those rare divas (in the classical sense) who isn't a diva (in the pejorative sense) at all. As Greg Kurstin, who co-wrote and produced "Hello," tells EW about working with the singer, "I would press record, and she'd sing it from start to finish. In this day and age, not a lot of people do that.... She'll do the first one, and it's great. She'll do a second one—and it's even better." —*Kevin O'Donnell*

ADELE: GHNASSIA/SIPA/REX SHUTTERSTOCK

PRATT PHOTOGRAPH BY **BEN WATTS**

TARAJI P. HENSON

FIERCE, FIERY, FABULOUS: THE 45-YEAR-OLD ACTRESS FINALLY GOT A WELL-DESERVED CLOSE-UP AND BECAME AN INSTANT POP CULTURE ICON

Surprisingly, Taraji P. Henson's craziest moment of 2015 didn't come when she learned about her first-ever Emmy nomination, for playing *Empire*'s Cookie Lyon, whose over-the-top outfits and GIF-worthy one-liners have made her a pop culture phenomenon. That moment came on an otherwise typical day of filming on location in Chicago when Henson had to return to base camp for a simple wardrobe change—and she suddenly got mobbed by fans. "The crowds kept growing and growing," says Henson, whose past projects, like *Person of Interest* and *Hustle & Flow,* didn't inspire the kind of rabid obsession *Empire* does. "It was getting more and more difficult to move me around. They were like, 'We have to move her! She's got to make a costume change!' So they took me out the back door and put me in this van. But the fans got wind that they were moving me, so they started running and chasing us. They were banging on the van, yelling, 'Cookie, Cookie!' The police were trying to stop them." For a minute, Henson had forgotten just how irresistible her alter ego had become to the drama's nearly 17 million viewers. "I looked around and said, 'Who the hell is in here?' And the driver said, 'Babe, they are chasing you. It's all for you.' I couldn't believe it. The only way I could put it is if I were Madonna or Michael Jackson or Beyoncé. That's how I felt." —*Lynette Rice*

Entertainers of the Year 2015

OUR ENTERTAINERS PICK THEIR ENTERTAINERS

CHRIS PRATT, KERRY WASHINGTON, AZIZ ANSARI, AND MORE SHARE THE STARS WHO RULED THEIR YEAR AT **EW.COM/EOYPICKS**

Aziz Ansari

THE COMEDIAN, 32, BID FAREWELL TO ONE BELOVED SITCOM—AND LAUNCHED A NEW ONE OF HIS VERY OWN. HE OPENS UP ABOUT THE JOYS—AND STRUGGLES—OF PULLING IT ALL OFF.

PARKS AND RECREATION'S FINAL SEASON

"Since we knew it was the last season, I tried to really cherish the time I had with them. It's such a special group. I remember we were doing a scene with me and Adam [Scott] and [Nick] Offerman. We were in the middle of a scene, and I was just like, 'Wow, this is an incredible job I got to have.' I got to work with these people who I really enjoy working with creatively and really admire and enjoy personally. I got to be on a show that a lot of people really like. It was an amazing end to a fantastic experience."

MODERN ROMANCE

"I'd never done a book—I had no clue what to expect. I really enjoyed all the interviews [sociologist and co-author] Erik Klinenberg and I did for the book. It was so interesting talking to all these different people, and meeting with academics and asking them questions, and just learning more. But I'd say the hardest part was sitting down and writing it—and not going on the Internet to waste time. That's the hardest part of *everything* for me!"

MASTER OF NONE

"I talked to other people who've done things where you're acting and writing and directing. Everyone tells me, 'You're going to get tired.' And by the last episode we filmed—the Nashville episode, which I also directed—I was really just running on fumes. It was really hard, but luckily Alan [Yang, *Master of None* co-creator] was there to help me out. Without him, I don't know what would've happened! The totality of that amount of work is tough. When you create a show, you just don't realize how many things you have to weigh in on. It's so much stuff! But it's fun, and the biggest reward ever is seeing people respond the way they have. We put so much of ourselves in this show, and to see people respond to it in this way is amazing." —*Ray Rahman*

HENSON: WILLIAMS + KIRAKAWA/CORBIS; ANSARI: REED YOUNG/IDS

The Cast of

GAME OF THRONES

NO SHAME HERE: HOW 30 INCREDIBLE ACTORS DELIVERED THE YEAR'S MOST RIVETING DRAMA—AND BROKE THE INTERNET

It doesn't make any sense that the biggest cast on TV should also be one of the best, but so it goes with *Game of Thrones*, the epic drama that's home to nearly 30 series regulars—a number that any producer can tell you is utterly nuts. What's crazier still is that since the show airs just 10 episodes a year, even top-billed actors like Peter Dinklage receive only about one hour of actual screen time each season. Yet millions around the world obsess over *Thrones*' characters and their riveting story lines, thanks mainly to the actors' searing performances, which manage to stand out even when they share scenes with literal giants and dragons. "There are so many ways this show could have died in the crib, but the most likely killer would have been the cast," showrunners David Benioff and Dan Weiss tell EW. "It's difficult enough to find a single actor who is perfect for a single role, and more difficult still to find, say, five ideal actors. But to find 30, 40, or more? The odds against that are astronomical."

Season 5 managed to raise the show's already high acting bar again, aided in part by the younger Stark siblings as they continued to grow into their roles: There was Jon Snow's tragic arc, where Kit Harington told us more with his dark eyes than many convey with entire monologues; Sansa's horrifying, abusive marriage that brought out Sophie Turner's most textured performance yet; Arya's ongoing lessons in murder that allowed Maisie Williams to demonstrate her preternatural acting instincts. The Television Academy are rather big fans as well, with the show sweeping the Emmys with a total of 12 awards, including the coveted Outstanding Drama Series and Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Drama Series for Dinklage—much to his surprise. "I was chewing gum, that's how unprepared I was!" he marveled. "My wife said, 'I told you you should have prepared something.'"

So does all this acclaim go to the cast's heads? Fortunately for the producers, no. "Our friends ask, 'Okay, who's the psycho? There's at least one in every cast,'" Benioff and Weiss say. "And that's true. There is a psychopath, but we're not going to tell you [who]. All the others are top-notch." We suspect Ser Pounce. —*James Hibberd*

GANG'S ALL HERE Nine scenes from *GoT* season 5, including the tragic death of Jon Snow (below, far right), which blew up Twitter in June

WHITE WALKER: HBO; CLARKE & CO.: NICK WALL/HBO; WILLIAMS: MACALL B. POLAY/HBO; ALL OTHERS: HELEN SLOAN/HBO (6)

Nicki Minaj

SHE MADE UP WITH TAYLOR. SHE BEEFED WITH MILEY. AND SHE SLAYED WITH HER EPIC *PINKPRINT* TOUR. THE 32-YEAR-OLD HIP-HOP STAR LOOKS BACK ON HER WILD RIDE—AND REVEALS WHAT'S NEXT IN 2016.

• What were some of the biggest highlights for you in 2015?
I love that I wrapped a movie that I'm really proud of, *Barbershop 3*. That's going to be coming out next year. I loved getting the cover of *The New York Times Magazine*. I loved breaking a *Billboard* record with my singles off my album *The Pinkprint*. And I loved the performance [for Jay Z's streaming service Tidal] at Barclays, me singing with Beyoncé and just knowing that we were doing it for Tidal and all of the artists came out.... I think those were a few of the accomplishments that I'm excited about.

• How did you surprise yourself this year?
I think I grew up a lot. I got a little bit more centered.

• What can fans expect from your upcoming TV show for ABC Family?
You can expect it to be very authentic. In fact, I'm doing the auditions. I'm literally sitting in the auditions and I think I have a little girl that I found [to play young Minaj] who I'm obsessed with and who seems just incredible in every way.

What's on tap for next year—will you return to the studio?
I just moved into a new house, so I'm excited about having some time to decorate and swim in the pool and to have regular girl-time. And then I'm very excited to start working on another movie, which I haven't spoken about but it's something that I can't wait to share with my fans.

You'll be acting in it?
Yeah. Well, both. I'm going to act and I'm going to be one of the executive producers.

Your *Pinkprint* tour was one of the best of the year. Any memorable moments from the road?
Well, I had never headlined an arena tour before in America, so it was amazing to see my American fans come together and have that energy in a big, humongous venue. The love was just on another level. I had done arena tours overseas—headlined them—but not in America. This was my first, so it was very sentimental to me. Hearing and seeing my fans sing back the words from *The Pinkprint*, and it's my newest album, it just gave me chills.
—*Marc Snetiker*

MINAJ: HOWARD HUANG

AMY SCHUMER

THE 34-YEAR-OLD HAD A BOX OFFICE SMASH AND HOSTED *SNL*—AND SHE'S THE ONLY COMEDIAN WHO CAN SAY SHE OPENED FOR HER MADGESTY

● **2015 has been a crazy year for you. Are you able to reflect on everything that has happened?**
Uh, no. [*Laughs*] You know, this past week I've been on red carpets with, like, Meryl Streep and Harrison Ford, and it seems comical. It just seems like, what has happened to the universe that's allowed me to be here?

● **What have been some of the highlights?**
I think that first SXSW screening of *Trainwreck*, when I realized people were going to like it. Working with Chris Rock [on my HBO special] and running around and doing clubs with him and getting notes. And hosting *Saturday Night Live* was insane. Even hearing myself say that is still like, what?

● **And remember when you opened for Madonna?**
That is a *life* highlight—not a year highlight. Wasn't it just like, what the f---? I could not be more in love with her. I can't believe she even knows my name. For real. It's *Madonna*. I went to a couple more of her concerts just to watch. I would go every night if I could.

● **Has there been a particularly surreal moment from 2015?**
Maybe just being at Madonna's show next to Sean Penn and, like, hanging out with him. But Meryl Streep talking to me is surreal. Jane Fonda talks to me. It's weird. I met Robert De Niro and he looked at me like he knew who I was! It's so crazy and weird, but I think I've got good perspective: It's hilarious that it's happening to me. I'm so proud of my work, but never did I think that I would be recognized at this level.
—*Sara Vilkomerson*

PHOTOGRAPH BY **ROBERT TRACHTENBERG**

JOHN OLIVER

IN A MESSY NEWS YEAR, THIS BRIT TURNED BIG HEADLINES INTO BIGGER PUNCHLINES

In 2015 there was an explosion of hosts on the late-night landscape, but only one has been able to make news as often as he covers it. During Last Week Tonight's *second season, John Oliver, 38, has gone above and beyond (and abroad) with his headline-grabbing exploits. The host recalls for us some highlights of his year, from sitting down with a wanted man to starting a church.*

SCORING AN INTERVIEW WITH EDWARD SNOWDEN

"I guess I went to Russia to interview a *fugitive*...so that was kind of fun! [*Laughs*] The Snowden interview, that took a *long* time. It was a strain on production here. There's nothing easy about getting into a room with him, and then getting *out* of that room—and being alive."

WATCHING FIFA FALL APART

"Most of the rest of the world has grown up understanding that FIFA is a comically corrupt organization. It's like *cartoon* corruption. So ahead of the World Cup last year, [our FIFA coverage] was more about introducing what a monstrous group of people FIFA are to people who have not heard about it. Still, at no point did I think anything was going to come of it—I didn't think there would ever be any consequences to FIFA. But when the [Department of Justice] got involved, all of a sudden it starts going down like a house of cards. It was breathtaking to watch."

FOUNDING A LEGIT, IRS-RECOGNIZED CHURCH, OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL EXEMPTION

"We tried a few different longer-form things this year, which I'm very proud of. Like starting a religion, which involved, like, seven months of back-and-forth through the mail with a pseudo church—or an *actual* church, as proven by the IRS. So that was fun. Seeing as it seems HBO will let us get away with anything, we're trying to see how true that is." —*Ray Rahman*

Lin-Manu

THE TOAST OF BROADWAY CREATED THE HOTTEST TICKET IN TOWN—AND REVOLUTIONIZED THE MUSICAL—WITH *HAMILTON*

WITHOUT MICHAEL JACKSON, THERE would be no *Hamilton*. Just ask Lin-Manuel Miranda, the creative force behind—and star of—the year's hottest Broadway musical. "Me trying to do the 'Thriller' dance for my family at a party is just as responsible for me being here as anything else in my life," says the 35-year-old writer, composer, and

OLIVER: GASPER TRINGALE/CPI SYNDICATION; MIRANDA AND STREEP: WALTER MCBRIDE/GETTY IMAGES; MIRANDA AND WATSON: JENNY ANDERSON/GETTY IMAGES

Entertainers of the Year 2015

LIN-MANUEL MIRANDA WITH HIS CELEB FANS

1 Meryl Streep
2 George Lucas
3 Sarah Silverman
4 Stephen Colbert
5 Forest Whitaker
6 Pharrell Williams
7 Lena Dunham
8 Oprah Winfrey
9 Cate Blanchett
10 Matthew McConaughey
11 Bill Gates
12 Emma Watson
13 Brooke Shields
14 Selena Gomez

[**BELOW**] Miranda on stage in *Hamilton*

el Miranda

performer. "In every family someone's going to get up and talk. That was me. I was the comic relief, and my writing is an extension of that."

Inspired by Ron Chernow's 2004 biography of Alexander Hamilton, Miranda's musical about the Founding Father's rise and fall is the biggest cultural smash on Broadway this decade, pulling in more than $1 million in weekly grosses, a staggering $60 million in advance ticket sales, and a list of celebrity attendees from Beyoncé to Obama (twice!).

Hamilton is also one of Broadway's unlikeliest successes: With an ethnically diverse cast playing a slew of dead white guys, the show challenges the traditions of theater melodies with a rap-heavy score and a history-spanning narrative. "I've chased musical ideas that were dead ends, but the ones that dig in, *they* grab *you*," says Miranda, who wrote and starred in 2008's Tony-winning *In the Heights*. "I felt like a mosquito that hit an artery. *Hamilton* grabbed me and would not let the f--- go."

The media is doing the same to Miranda. He's been dubbed a pop culture icon, a visionary, and a genius (he has a 2015 MacArthur grant to back it up). "I'm enjoying the s--- out of it, honestly, but I'm mindful of staying appreciative of what rarefied air it is," he says. But for all of *Hamilton*'s success, Miranda is perhaps most taken with the response he's received from the hip-hop community. "I was hoping the artists I admire would see the show, but what I didn't expect was the inspiration they got in return. You meet your heroes, people who I spent hundreds of hours memorizing their lyrics, and now they want to dissect mine."

Next up, Miranda's tackling a film adaptation of *Heights* and penning the score for Disney's *Moana*. "*Hamilton* is everything I know about writing musicals right now," he says. "I'm really at the beginning of my career, and still learning." —*Marc Snetiker*

MIRANDA: BRUCE GILKAS/FILMMAGIC.COM (12); *HAMILTON*: SARA KRULWICH/*THE NEW YORK TIMES*/REDUX PICTURES

[CLOCKWISE FROM CENTER] Shonda Rhimes, Ellen Pompeo, Viola Davis, and Kerry Washington

The Stars of

Shondaland

THANKS TO SHONDA RHIMES—THE BOLD BRAINS BEHIND THEIR TGIT LINEUP—THE STARS OF *GREY'S ANATOMY*, *SCANDAL*, AND *HOW TO GET AWAY WITH MURDER* REDEFINED MUST-SEE TV. RHIMES AND HER LEADING LADIES TAKE US BEHIND THE SCENES.

SCANDAL COMMITS TO THE HOLIDAYS

"We all really go all-out at Halloween on *Scandal*," says Kerry Washington. "Myself and the women I work with, we all came as the cast of *Star Wars*. I was Darth Vader, and my daughter, Isabelle—simply because she was the shortest—was R2-D2. Three of us have dogs, and our dogs were all Ewoks."

SHONDA STOCKS THE BEST BOOZE

"In Shonda's office, there's always a good bottle of wine to be had," says *Murder* star Viola Davis. "Just to calm the nerves a little bit for some of these salacious sex scenes, long schedules, and risk-taking scenes that go on. We like to loosen up that way."

GREY'S IS ONE BIG DANCE PARTY

"I listen to music constantly on the set while I'm filming," says Ellen Pompeo. "Mostly hip-hop. We dance to [Drake's] 'Hotline Bling' for many hours, many days. He's a favorite over here."

THURSDAY NIGHTS ARE TRULY A PARTY IN SHONDALAND

"We have a movie theater in our basement," says Rhimes. "Every Thursday night, we pipe in the East Coast feed of the shows, I buy pizzas for everybody, and we do—against the rules—bring down a bunch of bottles of wine from my office. Any of the actors or crew members come to the theater, and you can live-tweet the shows there with everybody else so you're not doing it by yourself. The party's always waiting." —*Natalie Abrams*

PHOTOGRAPH BY **JAMES WHITE**

QUEEN LATIFAH
MARY J. BLIGE DAVID ALAN GRIER NE-YO
ELIJAH KELLEY UZO ADUBA AMBER RILEY COMMON
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TAYLOR SWIFT

JUST HOW BIG WAS THE POP STAR'S *1989* WORLD TOUR IN 2015? *EW* BREAKS IT DOWN BY THE NUMBERS.

85
NUMBER OF TOUR DATES

$5,397,066
AVERAGE GROSS PER CITY*

9
NUMBER OF SWIFT'S OUTFIT CHANGES PER SHOW

4,579,000
NUMBER OF TIMES THE HASHTAG #1989TOUR WAS TWEETED

1.2 MILLION
NUMBER OF TIMES THE HASHTAG #SQUADGOALS WAS TWEETED

101
NUMBER OF CELEBRITY GUESTS WHO APPEARED ON STAGE

1
NUMBER OF PROFESSIONAL SPORTS TEAMS IN HER SQUAD (U.S. WOMEN'S SOCCER TEAM)

*SOURCE: POLLSTAR

Elizabeth Banks

FROM SAYING GOODBYE TO ONE HISTORY-MAKING FRANCHISE TO TAKING THE HELM OF ANOTHER ONE, THE ACTRESS-DIRECTOR, 41, HIT ALL THE RIGHT NOTES

● **What was most gratifying about directing *Pitch Perfect 2*?**
That the movie worked! That it made money. That I didn't fail. Because I represent all of womankind, obviously, and if I had failed that would have been not only bad for me but for all femaledom. [It's] ridiculous, but those were the stakes.

● **You're directing *Pitch Perfect 3*. Is this where you want to take your career?**
I'm an actress over 35, so the number of really interesting roles that are going to come my way is not as high. The number of directing jobs that will come my way will be slightly more interesting. I just want to keep being a storyteller.

● **Do you feel like there is a lot of pressure to up the ante for No. 3?**
One of my goals for the second film was to open up the world: go beyond a college campus, go beyond collegiate singing. I think we accomplished that in a great way, so now I feel actually slightly less pressure. [*Laughs*] People really love these characters, so it's now going to be about finding a great journey for them to go on.

● **How do you feel about playing Effie Trinket for the last time?**
I'm very sad. She became really iconic. I think I've made more out of Effie than anyone imagined, including Suzanne Collins.

● **Did Suzanne tell you that?**
She allowed me to be in *Mockingjay*, and she didn't write Effie in *Mockingjay*. But she saw *Catching Fire* and saw that Effie was someone audiences cared about and she thought it was important for Effie to follow Katniss to District 13.

● **This year feels like the year of the woman, between all the great performances and all the talk about gender equality. How do you feel about it?**
There is a lot of great conversation happening. But it's important to remember that these moments come and go and that change is typically glacially paced. What I love now is that we have data [on the lack of female directors] and it's really hard to ignore the numbers. I think that's helping.
—*Nicole Sperling*

BANKS: PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTOPHER BEYER; SWIFT: GEORGE PIMENTEL/GETTY IMAGES

Entertainers of the Year 2015

[CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT] Aldis Hodge, Neil Brown Jr., Corey Hawkins, Jason Mitchell, and O'Shea Jackson Jr.

The Cast of

Straight Outta Compton

THE GRIPPING BIOPIC ON THE TRAILBLAZING HIP-HOP GROUP WAS A BLOCKBUSTER WIT' ATTITUDE

From "F--- tha Police" to "for your consideration," *Straight Outta Compton* stands as 2015's unstoppable biopic. The film, which dramatizes N.W.A's crossover from underground rap group to multi-platinum-selling phenom, took in more than $200 million in ticket sales worldwide. Now Universal has launched a full-blown Oscar campaign, the first of its kind for a hip-hop biopic. "*Walk the Line* or *Ray*, you see these movies really take the essence of a person to the next level," says Jason Mitchell, who portrays the late frontman Eazy-E. "I wasn't expecting this."

It wasn't an easy journey to bring the movie to the masses. As a producer, N.W.A's Ice Cube spent seven years helping to shape the screenplay about his rise with groupmates Eazy-E, MC Ren, DJ Yella, and Dr. Dre, bring director F. Gary Gray onto the project, and iron out a studio deal. The biopic's wild success serves as more than just personal validation for Cube. "I wanted this to connect more than any movie I've ever done," says the actor-producer. "Not only is it my history, it's a time capsule of a moment that affected the whole world."

While critics were swift to point out that the movie omits depicting Dre's history of alleged abuse—the rapper later apologized to the "women I've hurt" in a statement to *The New York Times*—the film does serve as a reminder of racial issues that persist today. "The whole Ferguson thing, 'Hands up, don't shoot,' the #BlackLivesMatter was popping off while we did this movie," says O'Shea Jackson Jr., who plays his real-life father, Ice Cube. "It speaks to people because it's so much beyond the two-hour music video that some people wanted to give us credit for."

To hear it from Mitchell, however, shooting on the streets of Compton last year served to emphasize how fan love for "Boyz-N-the-Hood" has never faded. "I had a guy walk up to me and get so close, he was under my hat bill," recalls Mitchell. "He was like, 'Bro! You like seeing a ghost, bro. You are Eazy-E!' I'm tripping out: 'You're really close to me right now!' But to have somebody that excited was amazing. It was the creepiest thing I ever loved." —*Chris Lee*

TODD MACMILLAN

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Entertainment WEEKLY EVENTS

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The party continued after hours at EW Fest @ Night with *Empire* stars Taraji P. Henson and Jussie Smollett while The Band Perry closed out the night.

From L-R clockwise: Keke Palmer, Lea Michele, Emma Roberts, Matt Bomer, Kathy Bates, Ryan Murphy, EW Senior Writer Tim Stack; Aziz Ansari; Jussie Smollett and Taraji P. Henson; EW Editor Nina Terrero and Marcus Johns; The Band Perry; EW cover portrait artist with fan; Keke Palmer and Lea Michele, Young Adult Authors Panelists; Oscar Contenders Panelists; LG OLED TV Living Room; EW Fest guests; Desmin Borges; Chris Carter, Darin Morgan and Glen Morgan.

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Caitlyn Jenner

HER NEW REALITY WASN'T JUST FODDER FOR TABLOIDS—IT HELPED AMERICANS EMBRACE TRANS AS A NEW NORMAL

THERE WAS A TIME WHEN, IF YOU TOLD anyone that the year's most politically groundbreaking pop culture icon would be a member of the Kardashian clan, no one would've believed you. That changed when Caitlyn Jenner, 66, came out as transgender in a brave interview with Diane Sawyer last April, revealed her new look on the cover of *Vanity Fair* in June, broke Obama's Twitter record by racking up one million followers in four hours, and, one month later, premiered a reality TV show so radical, it's hard to believe it aired on E!, the channel that brought you *Bridalplasty*. With her docu-series *I Am Cait*, Jenner deflected attention away from herself and toward the important voices we don't always get to hear, including transgender teens who've been bullied and transgender women who've been forced into sex work. She invited activists like Jenny Boylan to answer her questions—and educate her audience—about topics like the difference between gender and sexuality. She reignited debates about what really makes a woman, and reminded everyone that she could be female and transgender and still vote Republican, still ride dirt bikes, and still refer to herself as her daughters' "daddy." "Do I project the right image?" she wondered on the show, before admitting, "I just hope I get it right." But the best thing she taught us was that there is no "right" way to be trans, there's just what Jenner calls living "your truth." —*Melissa Maerz*

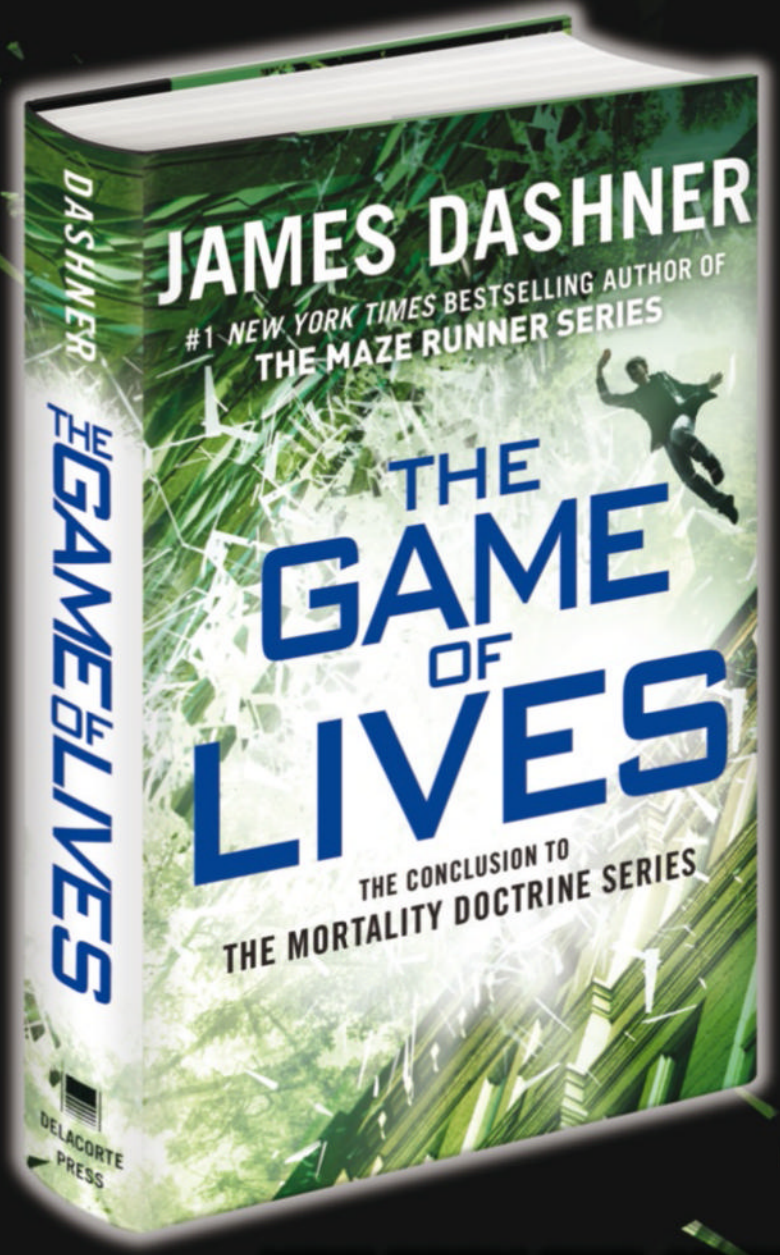
TUNE IN FOR MORE WITH *EW*'S ENTERTAINERS

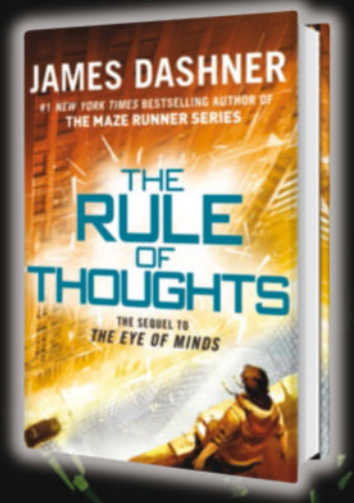
You've seen our picks for Entertainers of the Year, now watch us celebrate them in prime time with **VH1 Big in 2015 With Entertainment Weekly**, airing Monday, Dec. 7, at 9 p.m. on VH1. Where else can you see Amber Rose toast Amy Schumer and her *Trainwreck* year, Aubrey Plaza honor fellow *Parks and Rec* alum (and *Master of None* mastermind) Aziz Ansari, or Miss Piggy get handsy with breakout *Pitch Perfect 2* director Elizabeth Banks? Hosted by rapper T.I., the special will also include appearances from Taraji P. Henson, Queen Latifah, Ice Cube, Nicki Minaj, and more. So tune in and continue the conversation by sharing your picks for who dominated your pop culture world this year at *ew.com/bigin2015* and on Twitter with #BIGin2015.

[**ABOVE**] Miss Piggy and Elizabeth Banks [**BELOW**] Amber Rose and Amy Schumer

JENNER: RAYMOND HALL/GETTY IMAGES; MISS PIGGY AND BANKS, ROSE AND SCHUMER: MARK DAVIS/GETTY IMAGES (2)

THIS GAME MIGHT JUST KILL YOU.





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EW's Holiday

GIFT GUIDE

'TIS THE SEASON TO CELEBRATE WHO YOU LOVE...AND WHAT THEY LOVE. WE FOUND 50 OUT-OF-THIS-WORLD PRESENTS FOR EVERY POP CULTURE FAN ON YOUR LIST. MAY THE GIFT-GIVING FORCE BE WITH YOU.

By STEPHANIE SCHOMER

Photographs by DYAD PHOTOGRAPHY

Cozy up to Luke, Leia, and Han with Pendleton Woolen Mills' limited-edition ***A New Hope* blanket**. *$249, pendleton-usa.com*

PROPS: CHANEL KENNEBREW

Inside, find the perfect portable speaker, a stylish farewell to Don Draper, and more must-have *Star Wars* goodies

For The BOOKWORM

FOR THE (BOOK CLUB) HOST WITH THE MOST

Syncline Winery **Subduction Red 2013** *$25, mouth.com;* **Red Luster wineglass** *$10, crateandbarrel.com*

Prestat **chocolate truffle gift boxes** *$25, bloomingdales.com*

Sugar Paper **2016 weekly/monthly planner** *$17, bluesky.com*

WE'VE GOT YOUR 2016 COVERED WITH 12 MONTHS OF GREAT READS. *By* ISABELLA BIEDENHARN

1 JANUARY ***A Little Life*, by Hanya Yanagihara** The saga of four friends—one with an unspeakably awful past—will electrify the new year.

2 FEBRUARY ***Ann Tenna*, by Marisa Acocella Marchetto** Fall in love with a cosmic gossip columnist in this graphic novel.

3 MARCH ***The Bazaar of Bad Dreams*, by Stephen King** Terrifying short stories with autobiographical intros from King.

4 APRIL ***Kitchens of the Great Midwest*, by J. Ryan Stradal** Devour this novel about the life of a star chef. Recipes included!

5 MAY ***So You've Been Publicly Shamed*, by Jon Ronson** Required reading for the Internet age: lives derailed after mistakes were met with online shaming.

6 JUNE ***Barbarian Days: A Surfing Life*, by William Finnegan** Surf's up with this love letter to the wave-riding sport.

7 JULY ***Pacific*, by Simon Winchester** Not quite a "beach read" but a history of the Pacific Ocean, from H-bombs to *Gidget*.

8 AUGUST ***Bettyville: A Memoir*, by George Hodgman** Spend the last month of summer in Missouri exploring a complex mother-son relationship.

9 SEPTEMBER ***The Art of Memoir*, by Mary Karr** Go back to school with the master of memoirs as she spills her tricks of the trade.

10 OCTOBER ***In a Dark, Dark Wood*, by Ruth Ware** Celebrate Halloween with a bachelorette party, a murder, and a foggy memory.

11 NOVEMBER ***The Explorers Guild*, by Jon Baird and Kevin Costner** A nod to the swash-buckling tales of Robert Louis Stevenson and Rudyard Kipling.

12 DECEMBER ***The Thousand Dollar Dinner*, by Becky Libourel Diamond** A mouthwatering tale of one luxurious 1851 dinner.

THE GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING

For those who've torn through the best-seller list, **Book of the Month** delivers a new hardcover, selected by one of the club's judges along with a handwritten note. *From $10 a month, bookofthemonth.com*

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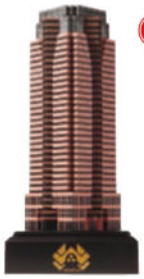
For The FILM BUFF



KEVIN McCALLISTER, JAMES BOND, JOHN McCLANE—MOVIE NIGHT IS IN GOOD HANDS

❶ Turn any space into a cinema with Sony's mobile **Pico projector**. Stream video from a phone via Wi-Fi to project a picture up to 120". *$350*
❷ This deluxe edition of **Air's soundtrack to *The Virgin Suicides***—featuring studio outtakes and a live performance—reminds us why we fell for the 2000 cult film in the first place. *$96*
❸ Make the *Die Hard* diehard scream "Yippee-ki-yay!" with the **Nakatomi Plaza box set**, complete with every film on Blu-ray and a 15" model of the famed building. *$130*
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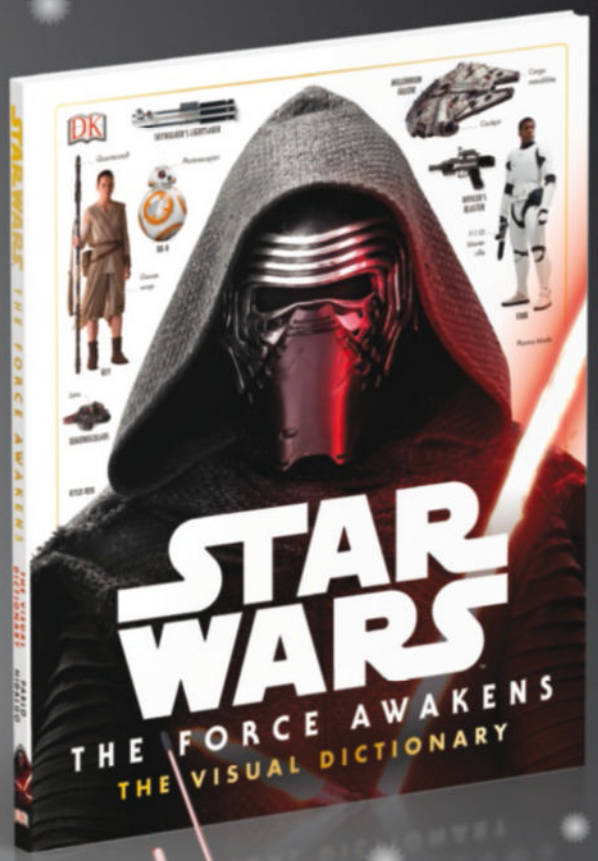
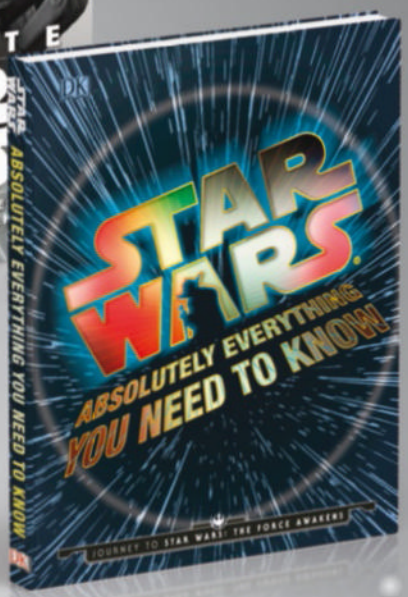
Perfect for the rabid theatergoer, **MoviePass** offers unlimited access to a variety of cinemas nationwide for one flat fee. *$125 for three months, moviepass.com*

PROPS: CHANEL KENNEBREW

STAR WARS

THE BEST PRESENTS AREN'T FAR, FAR AWAY....





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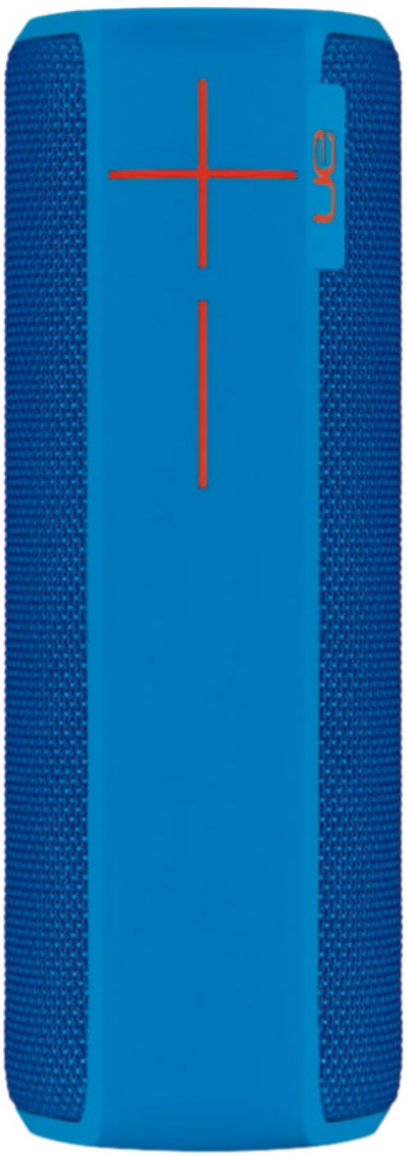

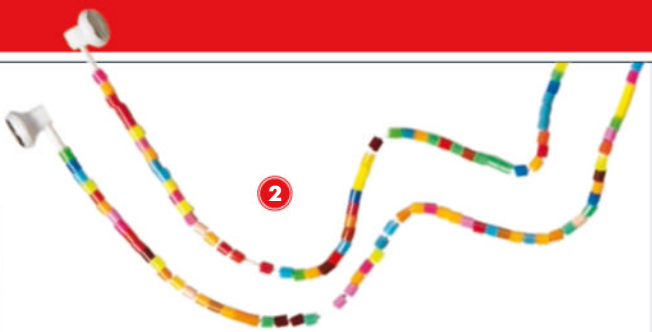

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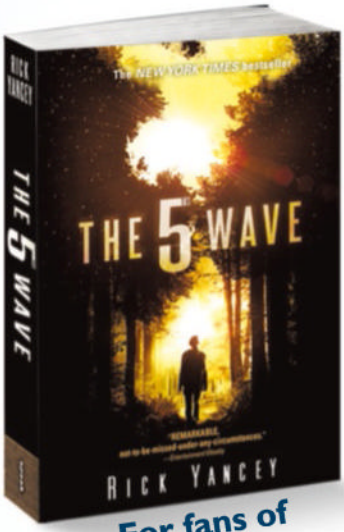
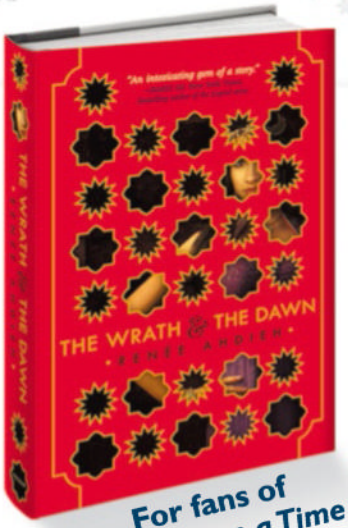
PROPS: CHANEL KENNEBREW

FROM ALIEN INVASIONS TO FORBIDDEN ROMANCE...

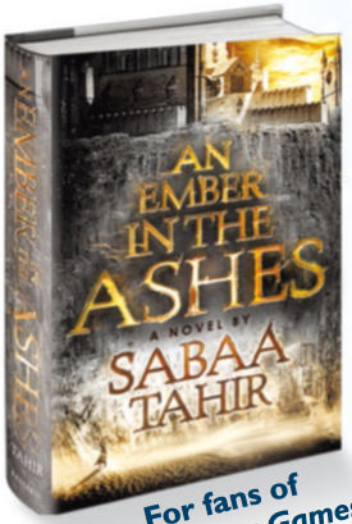
THIS HOLIDAY IS GOING TO BE EPIC



For fans of The Martian



For fans of Once Upon a Time



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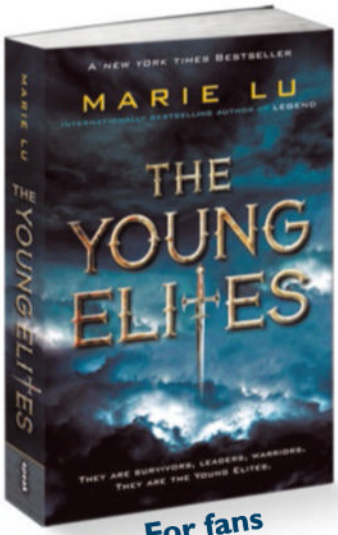

For fans of X-Men

For fans of Game of Thrones

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For The TV FANATIC

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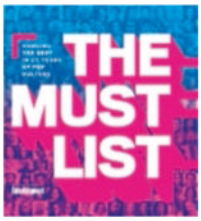

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NO MATTER WHAT FANDOM THEY BELONG TO, WE HAVE WHAT THEY'RE WISHING FOR

1 Bring back family game night with ***Game of Thrones* Monopoly**. (Here's hoping you have less dysfunction than the Lannisters.) *$60*

2 For *Doctor Who* fans everywhere, their very own **TARDIS... sweatshirt**. *$50, thinkgeek.com*

3 Boasting a bright, crystal-clear picture, Samsung's **SUHD JS8500 smart TV** puts you in the action. *$1,300 for a 48-inch set*

4 For your *sassenach*, the ***Outlander* ultimate collection** comes with season 1, the soundtrack, photos, and a flask. *$156*

5 Revisit 25 years of pop culture hits (and a few misses) with EW's ***The Must List* book**. *$20*

6 Ahead of its January return, prepare those who've yet to discover the truth with the **complete series of *The X-Files*** on Blu-ray. *$300*

7 If there's one thing we learned from *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt*, it's the mantra on Sugar and Lemon's **handmade mug**. *$15, etsy.com/shop/sugarandlemon*

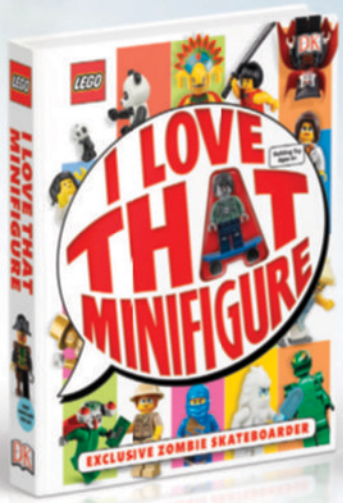
8 Even Don Draper would approve of Yumalum's ***Mad Men* poster**. *$29, etsy.com/shop/yumalum*

THE GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING

With access to the iTunes store and all of your Hulu and Netflix accounts—not to mention a brilliant voice-controlled Siri remote—the new **Apple TV** is perfect for your favorite couch potato. *From $149*

PROPS: CHANEL KENNEBREW; *SCREAM QUEENS*: STEVE DIETL/FOX

Build the Perfect Holiday



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For The STAR WARS OBSESSIVE

WHETHER THEY GREW UP IDOLIZING HAN SOLO OR ARE MEETING LEIA FOR THE FIRST TIME WHEN THE FORCE AWAKENS, HERE ARE GALACTIC GIFTS FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

1 Kids and grown-ups alike will fight over this one: The **Kylo Ren Force FX Lightsaber** has motion-sensor-controlled sound effects and—of course—it lights up. *$200*
2 Blasting music out of a *Star Wars* **TIE fighter**? Yes, please! The iHome speaker can also answer calls and plays the *Star Wars* theme. *$50*
3 For the true galaxy nerd, ***Star Wars* Frames: 100 Postcards** is a gorgeous collection of what George Lucas considers key moments in the original and prequel trilogies. *$25*
4 Patience they must have to craft LEGO's 1,329-piece ***Millennium Falcon***, with a detachable cockpit and spring-loaded shooter. *$150*
5 He's already everyone's favorite character, so bring home the **Remote Control BB-8** and let it roll in any direction it pleases. *$80, target.com*
6 Bedtime stories take on a whole different tune with this wonderfully creepy **Kylo Ren Electronic Voice Changer Helmet**. *$80*

PROPS: CHANEL KENNEBREW

CHEVY CHASE JOHN PAUL ROTHER TOM ARNOLD ROB SCHNEIDER
SHELBY
A MAGICAL HOLIDAY TAIL
FROM THE PRODUCER OF HARRY POTTER
PADDINGTON
May Your Holidays be Furry & Bright
CHUGGINGTON
THE BIG FREEZE
SAVING SANTA
ADVENTURES OF A TIME-TRAVELING ELF
Dean Cain Kristy Swanson Jet Jurgensmeyer Haylie Duff
A Belle For Christmas
This Christmas, it's all about puppy love.
DOUBLE FEATURE
The Dog Who Saved Christmas & The Dog Who Saved Christmas Vacation
TOGETHER IN ONE PACKAGE!
BRING HOME THESE FAMILY CLASSICS TODAY!
Paddington
PG MILD ACTION AND RUDE HUMOR
A Belle For Christmas
PG MILD THEMATIC MATERIAL AND RUDE HUMOR
Shelby: A Magical Holiday Tail
NOT RATED
THE WEINSTEIN COMPANY
anchorbayent.com
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ANCHOR BAY ENTERTAINMENT
Chuggington: The Big Freeze
Saving Santa
NOT RATED
The Dog Who Saved Christmas
PG SOME MILD LANGUAGE AND RUDE HUMOR
The Dog Who Saved Christmas Vacation
PG MILD RUDE HUMOR AND BRIEF LANGUAGE

Movies

EDITED BY **STEPHAN LEE @stephanmlee**

REEL NEWS

Modern *Memento* Christopher Nolan's told-backward indie thriller is getting a remake. We're confused already.

Furiouser* and *Furiouser Vin Diesel revealed he's planning spin-off movies from the *Fast & Furious* franchise.

▲ Alicia Vikander and Eddie Redmayne

The Danish Girl

STARRING	DIRECTED BY
Eddie Redmayne, Alicia Vikander, Amber Heard, Matthias Schoenaerts, Ben Whishaw	Tom Hooper

RATING	LENGTH	REVIEW BY
R	2 hrs.	Chris Nashawaty @*ChrisNashawaty*

ALTHOUGH IT'S SET 90 years ago, Tom Hooper's *The Danish Girl* couldn't feel more timely. 2015 has marked a turning point in the struggle for transgender acceptance, as high-profile symbols of that battle—from Caitlyn Jenner to Laverne Cox to the award-winning Amazon series *Transparent*—have crossed over into the mainstream, changing attitudes that until recently seemed unchangeable. It doesn't hurt that Eddie Redmayne, who earned a Best Actor Oscar less than a year ago for his transformational portrayal of Stephen Hawking in *The Theory of Everything*, delivers yet another staggering performance as the film's protagonist—a Copenhagen artist who became one of the first people to undergo gender-confirmation surgery. So why does *The Danish Girl* feel so remote? I think the problem is its director. Like Hooper's *The King's Speech*, the film is exquisitely made, capturing its time and place with a jeweler's eye. Every stick of furniture, every thread of clothing, every swatch of paint is fastidiously perfect. Yet there's something that's a bit lifeless in its perfection. It feels like a movie that's been lovingly crafted and put under glass in a museum. And I kept waiting for it to move me more than it did.

Based on David Ebershoff's 2000 novel, *The Danish Girl* invites us to admire the loving marriage between renowned landscape

painter Einar Wegener (Redmayne) and his less famous portrait-artist wife, Gerda (Alicia Vikander). But slowly Hooper and screenwriter Lucinda Coxon draw back the embroidered curtain to hint at the hidden side to Einar. You can see it in the way he runs his fingers across his wife's silk nightgown when they embrace and in the way he looks at other women—not leeringly or out of desire to be with them, but rather to *be* them. He's studying their behavior, taking note of how they carry themselves. Einar's secret is outed when Gerda asks him to model for one of her female portraits by putting on stockings and holding a delicate feminine pose. At first it's all a game. They even christen Einar's alter ego "Lili." But for Einar it's more than that. It's a moment of liberation. A chance to become the person she's always been inside.

As Lili starts to appear with more frequency, the compassionate Gerda wrestles with how to react. Her husband has gained something, but she's lost something. Vikander conveys her character's psychological struggle with a stunning grace that's every bit the equal of her flashier costar's, especially when Einar, now fully blossomed as Lili, decides to go through with her groundbreaking but life-threatening surgery. Even with the handicap of acting behind the polite remove of Hooper's film, Vikander and Redmayne are two stars whose glow can't be dimmed. **B**

THIS FILM CONTAINS THE FOLLOWING:

- SS SILK STOCKINGS
- LL LIPSTICK LESSONS
- QD QUACK DOCTORS
- SM SCARF METAPHORS

The Good Dinosaur

STARRING Raymond Ochoa, Jeffrey Wright, Steve Zahn, Anna Paquin, Sam Elliott

DIRECTED BY Peter Sohn | **RATING** PG | **LENGTH** 1 hr., 41 mins.

REVIEW BY Kevin P. Sullivan @*KPSull*

PIXAR'S LATEST FILM has the misfortune of following what's perhaps Pixar's greatest. Comparisons to this summer's brilliant *Inside Out* were never going to help whatever the animation studio followed it up with, but *The Good Dinosaur* has problems of its own.

The story begins with a novel question: What if the asteroid that killed the dinosaurs millions of years ago actually missed Earth, allowing the prehistoric creatures to evolve, learn to farm, and develop speech? In practice, though, the conceit is a pat justification to pair the movie's young hero, an apatosaurus named Arlo, with a feral human boy he calls Spot, as Arlo tries to find his way home after he's swept away by a river.

While the story attempts the moves that a Pixar film typically makes—nonverbal storytelling, death, a bittersweet ending—most of *The Good Dinosaur*'s punches land soft, made worse by the disconnect that exists between the overly cartoonish style of the characters and the photorealistic landscapes. **B–**

PIXAR SIDEKICKS
From beloved to annoying

BELOVED ↑ ↓ ANNOYING

DORY
Finding Nemo

HAL THE COCKROACH
WALL•E

RUSSELL
Up

SPOT
The Good Dinosaur

MATER
Cars

CRITICAL MASS

For **10 current releases**, we compare EW's grade with scores averaged from IMDb, Metacritic, and Rotten Tomatoes

EW		IMDb	META-CRITIC	ROTTEN TOMATOES	AVG.
A	SPOTLIGHT	82	93	97	**91**
A–	CAROL	73	95	96	**88**
B	JAMES WHITE	73	86	91	**83**
B–	THE HUNGER GAMES: MOCKINGJAY—PART 2	74	75	81	**77**
B–	SPECTRE	72	60	63	**65**
B	LEGEND ▲	74	58	60	**64**
B–	THE 33	71	55	42	**56**
C+	BY THE SEA	57	44	33	**45**
C–	MY ALL AMERICAN	64	35	32	**44**
C	LOVE THE COOPERS	56	29	17	**34**

THE GOOD DINOSAUR, FINDING NEMO, WALL•E, UP, CARS 2: PIXAR (6); *LEGEND*: SIMON MEIN

SUPPORTING ROLES THAT REALLY LEAD

What defines a "supporting" part? Two actresses have put Oscar voters in a quandary. By Nicole Sperling

GONE ARE THE days when an actress could saunter onto a movie set, blow the place up with a few brilliant days of filming, and nab herself a Best Supporting Actress Oscar. Think Judi Dench in *Shakespeare in Love* or Beatrice Straight in *Network*—the shortest Oscar-winning performance ever at five minutes and 40 seconds. No more. This year, the decision by two studios to campaign a lead performance—Alicia Vikander in *The Danish Girl* (Focus Features) and Rooney Mara in *Carol* (The Weinstein Co.)—in the Supporting Actress category has upturned that race. Why are they doing it? The Supporting Actress race is less competitive this year than Best Actress, for starters. The move improves Vikander's odds of nabbing her first nomination. And for Mara, it prevents her from competing opposite her costar Cate Blanchett in the lead category. So it seems smart, yes, but it could backfire.

There's zero doubt that both Vikander and Mara do superb work in their films, but the Hollywood Foreign Press Association—the group behind the Golden Globes—has declined to consider them in its supporting category. Will the Oscars follow suit? Probably not. The Academy has historically deferred to the studios on this front. Nor does it care much what the Golden Globes does. In 2009, Kate Winslet (who's vying for a supporting nod in *Steve Jobs* this year) won the Best Actress Oscar for *The Reader* after scoring a supporting Golden Globe for the same role. The bad news, though, is that Vikander and Mara would still find themselves in a very tough race: competing against each other.

THE CONTENDERS

HOW THE BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS RACE LOOKS RIGHT NOW

Sure Things

1 **ALICIA VIKANDER** *The Danish Girl*

This year's It Girl looks like she's here to stay with *Ex Machina* and *The Danish Girl*, in which she manages to upstage Eddie Redmayne.

2 **ROONEY MARA** *Carol*

Matching wits and gravitas with Cate Blanchett isn't easy, but in *Carol*, Mara proves she's destined for the big leagues.

3 **KATE WINSLET** *Steve Jobs*

The film's weak box office could hinder her chances, but Winslet's steely turn opposite Michael Fassbender shouldn't be ignored.

Serious Threats

4 **JANE FONDA** *Youth*

Fonda reinforces her icon status with her startling work as an aging diva. Adding a third Oscar to her arsenal would only be fitting.

5 **JOAN ALLEN** *Room*

Allen's portrayal of an anguished mother reuniting with her long-lost daughter is the steadying force of this harrowing film.

6 **RACHEL McADAMS** *Spotlight*

It's a quiet performance amid some louder ones, but McAdams adds depth and heft to the film's most emotional scenes.

Potential Spoilers

7 **JENNIFER JASON LEIGH** *The Hateful Eight*

Bruised and handcuffed to Kurt Russell, Leigh's fugitive—the only female of the bunch—may be the most unhinged of all.

8 **JULIE WALTERS** *Brooklyn*

In an otherwise sweet movie, Walters provides just the right amount of spice as Saoirse Ronan's acerbic landlady.

9 **ELLEN PAGE** *Freeheld*

It's a long shot because the film wasn't well-received, but Page's first performance since coming out is also her most honest.

10 **KRISTEN STEWART** *Clouds of Sils Maria*

She astonished audiences as an actress' assistant, winning the supporting prize at Cannes. But will voters remember?

OSCAR STATUETTE: OSCAR® STATUETTE © AMPAS®; VIKANDER, STEWART: JON KOPALOFF/FILMMAGIC/GETTY IMAGES (2); MARA: GILBERT CARRASQUILLO/FILMMAGIC/GETTY IMAGES; WINSLET: SAMIR HUSSEIN/WIREIMAGE.COM; ALLEN: GABRIEL OLSEN/FILMMAGIC/GETTY IMAGES; FONDA: AMANDA EDWARDS/WIREIMAGE.COM; MCADAMS: SONIA RECCHIA/GETTY IMAGES; LEIGH: TIBRINA HOBSON/GETTY IMAGES; WALTERS: DAVE M. BENETT/GETTY IMAGES; PAGE: VITTORIO ZUNINO CELOTTO/GETTY IMAGES

AN IMPORTANT QUESTION

Which Frankenstein Would You Date?

So many monsters, so little time. Mary Shelley's lumbering literary creation gets another reboot this month with *Victor Frankenstein* (out Nov. 25), starring James McAvoy and Daniel Radcliffe. So it's high time that the best incarnations of the creature finally got a little love. By Dylan Kickham

WANT A MONSTER WHO MAKES YOU LAUGH?
YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN (1974)

Leave it to star Gene Wilder and director Mel Brooks to turn a horror-movie beast into a singing and dancing delight. Although the Monster (Peter Boyle) is still subject to fits of rage, he's the silliest back-from-the-dead boy to date.

OR ARE YOU ALL ABOUT LOOKS?
THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW (1975)

Dr. Frank-N-Furter's creation, Rocky Horror (Peter Hinwood), trades green skin and neck bolts for washboard abs and a gold Speedo. Like the original, he's mostly mute, even when he's being seduced by Susan Sarandon.

DO YOU JUST WANT SOMEONE REALLY NICE?
THE NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS (1993)

Frankenstein's monster is almost always a powerful brute, but writer Tim Burton's rag doll Sally (Catherine O'Hara) was only interested in hurting those who deserved it—like her creator, Dr. Finkelstein, and the evil Oogie Boogie.

OR ARE YOU MORE INTO BRAINS?
EX MACHINA (2015)

In this 21st-century Frankenstein story, a tech guru builds an AI prototype named Ava (Alicia Vikander) who's indistinguishable from a real human—except she is impossibly beautiful and brilliant and has a bare midriff you can see through. Oh, and she may kill you.

DO YOU WANT SOMETHING TO SNUGGLE UP WITH?
FRANKENWEENIE (2012)

Director Tim Burton's most recent animated feature turns the famous creature into a cuddly puppy. Sure, he strikes fear in the neighborhood, but Sparky is really just the same loyal dog he was when he was living. Awww.

OR DO YOU ALWAYS GO FOR THE BAD BOY?
I, FRANKENSTEIN (2014)

How do you transform a groaning lunkhead into a hard-bodied hunk? Make him a demon hunter! Instead of running from fire, Adam (Aaron Eckhart) teams up with gargoyle angels to fight the demons of hell. Postmortem never looked so good.

YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN: 20TH CENTURY FOX/KOBAL COLLECTION; *THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW*: 20TH CENTURY FOX/PHOTOFEST; *THE NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS*: DISNEY/EVERETT COLLECTION; *FRANKENWEENIE*: DISNEY; *I, FRANKENSTEIN*: BEN KING

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THE COMPLETE FIRST SEASON
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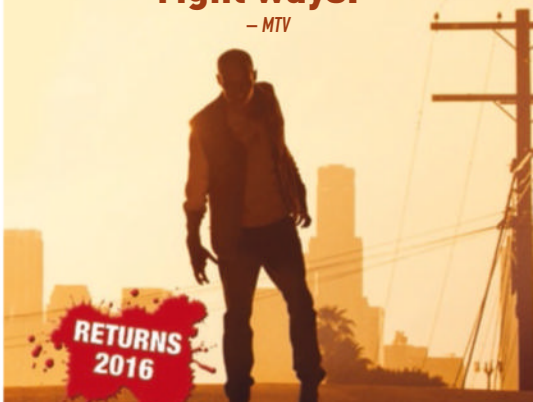
"scary in all the right ways."
– MTV



RETURNS 2016

Available on Blu-ray™ & DVD December 1st

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ANCHOR BAY ENTERTAINMENT

Creed

STARRING	DIRECTED BY
Michael B. Jordan, Sylvester Stallone, Tessa Thompson	Ryan Coogler

RATING	LENGTH	REVIEW BY
PG-13	2 hrs., 12 mins.	Chris Nashawaty @ChrisNashawaty

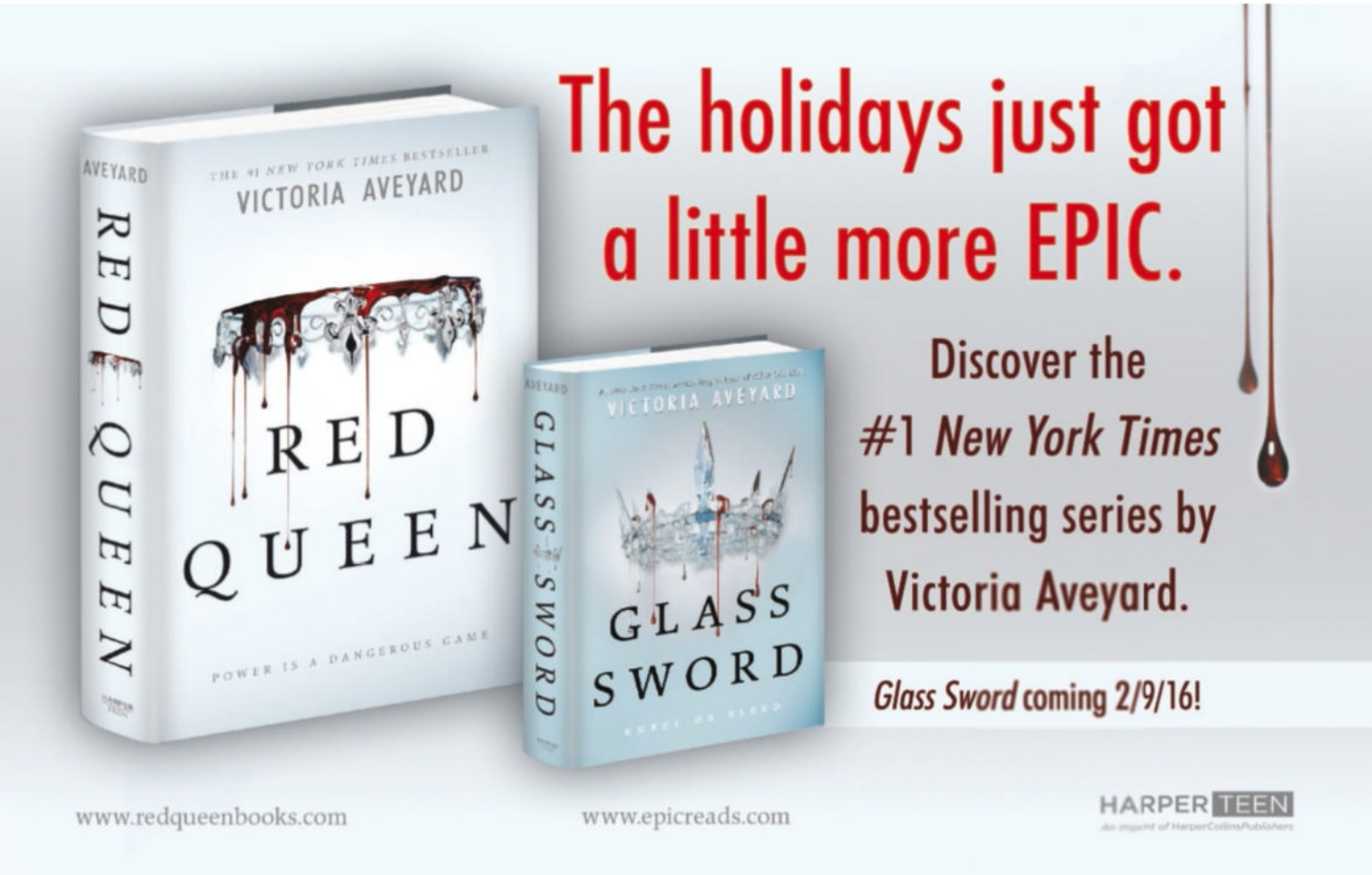
▲ Sylvester Stallone and Michael B. Jordan

BARRY WETCHER

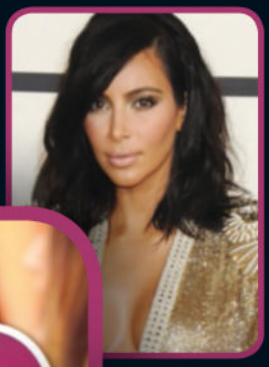
DON'T BE FOOLED by the title. For all intents and purposes, *Creed* is *Rocky 7*. But it would be a mistake to be put off by the wheeziness of that late-stage number. Because, with apologies to Clubber Lang and Ivan Drago, Ryan Coogler's rousingly emotional new film is the best installment since the 1976 original. It's easy to read that last sentence and shrug. But Sylvester Stallone's first *Rocky* was a dark, downbeat masterpiece that reflected its New Hollywood era. *Creed* taps into that same gritty underdog authenticity. Michael B. Jordan, reteaming with his *Fruitvale Station* director, plays Adonis Johnson—the out-of-wedlock son of Rocky's love-hate rival, Apollo Creed. Adonis, who never knew his father, was saved from a troubled childhood by Apollo's widow (Phylicia Rashad). Now grown and hungry to make a name for himself in the ring, he refuses to use his famous surname. Adonis begs Rocky to train him. And slowly, the aging Italian Stallion's reluctance melts when he sees how much the brash kid reminds him of himself back when he was a no-hope southpaw pounding frozen sides of beef. *Creed* is as formulaic and sentimental as you'd expect any *Rocky* movie to be, but Jordan and Stallone (looser and more vulnerable than he's been in 30 years) give the film an undeniable lump-in-the-throat poignancy. In the end it's a movie about legacy, and it more than preserves the *Rocky* franchise's. It reminds you why it was great in the first place. **A–**

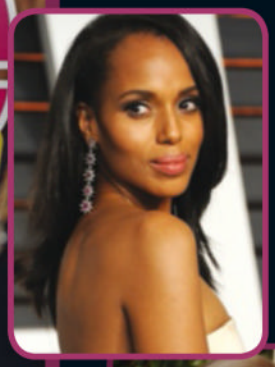
EW

MORE ON EW.COM Read our review of *Victor Frankenstein* (Nov. 25) on EW.com



People love **Hollywood**





People love **People**

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TV

EDITED BY **AMY WILKINSON** @amymwilk

▲ Jeffrey Tambor

Transparent

DATE	TIME	NETWORK	REVIEW BY
Premieres Dec. 11	Streaming	Amazon	Melissa Maerz @*MsMelissaMaerz*

DOES ANY COMING-OUT story have a real ending? Often when a drama follows a transgender character, that person's narrative arc begins and ends with his or her transition. But life goes on after that—and now, finally, so does television. The Emmy-winning first season of *Transparent* introduced us to Maura Pfefferman (Jeffrey Tambor), previously known as Mort, just as she revealed her new self to her three adult children, Sarah (Amy Landecker), Ali (Gaby Hoffmann), and Josh (Jay Duplass), inspiring the whole Pfefferman clan to question their own identities as their concepts of gender and sexuality became more fluid. Season 2 continues to delve into Maura's struggle as a trans woman, and *Transparent*'s first trans director, Silas Howard, and first trans writer, Lady J, help ensure that her experience is authentic. One of the best episodes finds Maura cast out from a feminist festival that doesn't welcome trans women, mirroring the real-life Michigan Womyn's Music Festival controversy of recent years. But as Maura starts to accept her gender as an ordinary, no-big-deal thing, so does the show, which is a somewhat radical move. Shifting focus from Maura to her kids, this season delves into a broader issue: How can you love someone for their true self when that true self keeps changing?

It's a smart twist that Maura, the Pfefferman who's changed the most on the outside, is the only one who's certain about who she is on the inside. The kids are still figuring that out. After leaving her husband to marry Tammy (Melora Hardin), Sarah ends up miserable on her wedding day, dying to sleep

JENNIFER CLASEN/AMAZON STUDIOS

LOGLINES

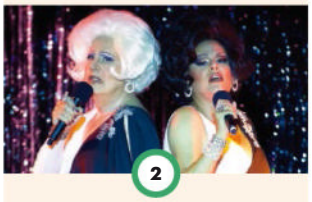
Sisters* in *SNL Tina Fey and Amy Poehler will cohost the sketch show's final episode of 2015. **Shondaland's Expansion** *The Catch*, Rhimes' new thriller starring Mireille Enos as a fraud investigator, will debut March 24.

CATCHING UP WITH THE PFEFFERMANS

No time to binge? Here are the three must-watch episodes from *Transparent*'s first season. **By Melissa Maerz**

1

"Pilot" *(Ep. 1)*
Pilots are supposed to invite us into fully realized worlds, and this one masters that art by introducing the Pfefferman family through their shared neuroses and inside jokes.



2

"Symbolic Exemplar" *(Ep. 7)*
An emotional look at how daddy issues shape the young Pfeffermans' love lives. Standout scene: Maura turns "Somebody That I Used to Know" into a powerful trans anthem.

3

"Best New Girl" *(Ep. 8)*
Flashbacks reveal intimate moments from the family's past, including Maura's secret trip to a cross-dressing camp, making these flawed characters deeply sympathetic.

TRANSPARENT PILOT: AMAZON STUDIOS; *TRANSPARENT*: BETH DUBBER/AMAZON STUDIOS (2)

with other people and explore other forbidden acts, including S&M. Ali, after being queer for "about five seconds," as Syd (Carrie Brownstein) puts it, is finally considering dating her friend—whose advances she has always rebuffed—as long as they can rewrite the rules of monogamy. ("What is being queer if not questioning *everything*?" Ali insists.) As Josh mourns the loss of the father he once knew, he's redefining what it means to be a dad, especially now that his son, Colton (Alex MacNicoll), has returned and Rabbi Raquel (Kathryn Hahn) is carrying Josh's baby. All of this ego-nurturing and soul-searching leads to Pfefferman fights that often end with someone shouting, "This is not about *you*!"

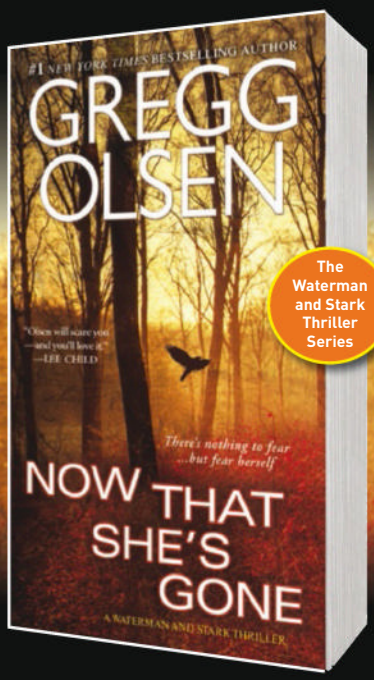
For most of the Pfeffermans, any newfound openness is really just selfishness in disguise, and it's fun to watch them brutally check one another's intentions as only brothers and sisters can. *Transparent* understands the intimacy of siblings better than any drama since *Six Feet Under*, where *Transparent* showrunner Jill Soloway got her start, and Soloway has a gift for making viewers shift loyalties from one Pfefferman to the next, as if we were part of the family.

But not everything here feels as natural as the relationships. One plotline explores 1930s Berlin, where Maura's ancestor (Hari Nef) lived in a tight-knit trans community. It's an interesting chronicle of a lost culture, but it feels more like a history lesson than an integral piece of the Pfefferman puzzle, and it illustrates one of this season's themes—that trauma can be passed down through DNA—too neatly. It's Sarah's, Ali's, and Josh's own funny, moving, sometimes enraging "transitions" that carry the season, as they still figure out how to act like grown-ups well into adulthood. Some people never stop becoming who they are, whether they're trans or not. **A–**

Revenge Can Be

Deadly...

"Will keep readers riveted."
—*PUBLISHERS WEEKLY*



"Olsen will scare you—and you'll love it."
—LEE CHILD

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ON SALE NOW

The **Holiday TV-Movie** Hot List

Mariah Carey may be the biggest draw of the small screen's seasonal offerings with *A Christmas Melody* (Hallmark, Dec. 19), but she's not the only one getting festive. (Well, as festive as she can be playing a bitchy PTA president.) Three dozen new yuletide movies are vying to shimmy down your chimney, so pull up your stockings and brace for these five trends. **By Dan Snierson**

Runaway Royals!

In ***A Prince for Christmas*** (Ion, Nov. 29), a king's son, who's faced with a looming arranged marriage, flees to America and dons plebeian duds to find truer love. ***Once Upon a Holiday*** (Hallmark, Nov. 25) reverses the lead's gender with a princess who ditches her royal obligations and regal garb to experience life like us commoners—one of whom wins her class-oblivious heart.

Animal Attraction

Are you a puppy person? A college student exercises a real estate developer's dog and possibly helps save a canine park in ***A Dogwalker's Christmas Tale*** (Up, Dec. 9). Do you find deer dear? One of Santa's helpers searches for a substitute reindeer for the injured Prancer in ***Last Chance for Christmas*** (Lifetime, Dec. 6). More of an equestrian? A woman gets gushy over a horse and a strapping cowboy in ***Rodeo & Juliet*** (Up, Dec. 21, and this year's hammiest title).

Sitcom-Parents Reunion Alert!

Mom and Dad are back together! In ***Becoming Santa*** (Lifetime, Dec. 12), *Family Ties*' Michael Gross and Meredith Baxter play the politically ambiguous Mr. and Mrs. Claus. (Sorry, no Michael J. Fox.) ***The Flight Before Christmas*** (Lifetime, Dec. 5) features *Family Matters*' Reginald VelJohnson and JoMarie Payton as innkeepers in a tale about two strangers stranded together in Montana. (Sorry, no Jaleel White.) And in ***Karen Kingsbury's The Bridge*** (Hallmark, Dec. 6), *Hope & Faith*'s Faith Ford and Ted McGinley play a bookstore-owning couple. (Sorry, no Megan Fox. Look it up—she played their daughter!)

Regifted From the Big Screen

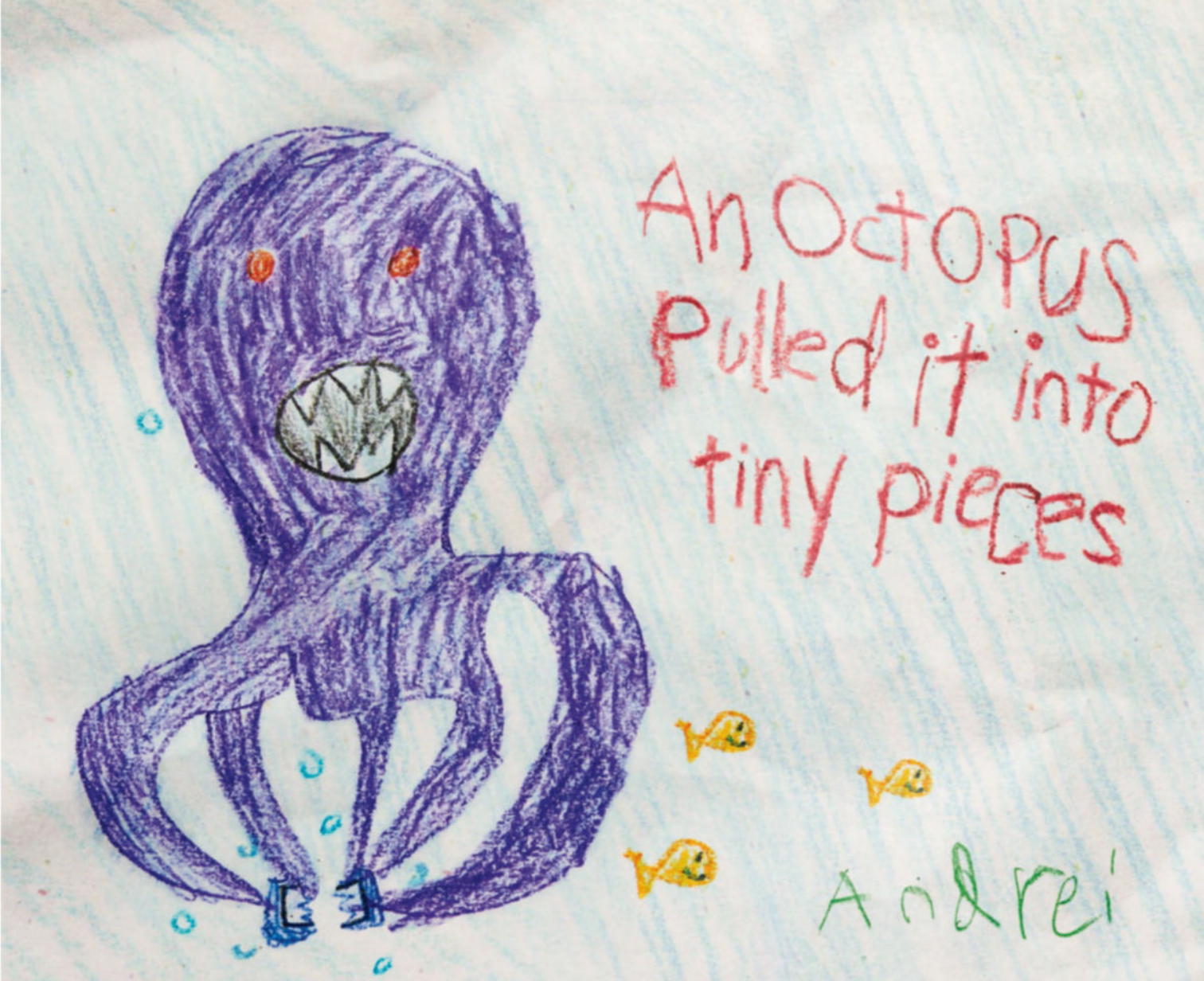
The aforementioned *A Prince for Christmas* seems awfully similar to *Coming to America*, and the celluloid semblances don't end there. Things get a little bit *Freaky Friday* when a father and his 11-year-old son switch bodies in ***Christmas Trade*** (Up, Dec. 1). And our pants would be engulfed in flames if we didn't say that ***I'm Not Ready for Christmas*** (Hallmark, Dec. 11), in which a girl's wish for her aunt (Alicia Witt) to stop fibbing comes true, sounds like a Carrey-over from *Liar Liar*.

Heir Ye, Heir Ye!

Where there's a will, there's a way to find drama. Maureen McCormick plays a woman who inherits her grandmother's run-down Christmas-tree farm, which she plans to sell, in ***Christmas Land*** (Hallmark, Dec. 20), whereas in ***Northpole: Open for Christmas*** (Hallmark, Dec. 2), a woman is bequeathed her aunt's hotel and aims to cash out. And in ***A Christmas Reunion*** (Ion, Dec. 13), Denise Richards plays an ad exec (slightly more realistic than a nuclear physicist) who learns that her aunt left her—and her ex-boyfriend—a bakery. Our prediction: They bake it till they make it.

▲ *Once Upon a Holiday*, *Rodeo & Juliet*, *Becoming Santa*, *I'm Not Ready for Christmas*, and *A Christmas Reunion*

LAST CHANCE FOR CHRISTMAS: CHRISTOS KALOHORIDIS/LIFETIME; *ONCE UPON A HOLIDAY*: MARCEL WILLIAMS/CROWN MEDIA; *RODEO & JULIET*: COURTESY OF RODEO & JULIET PICTURES, LLC; *BECOMING SANTA*: LIFETIME; *I'M NOT READY FOR CHRISTMAS*: FRED HAYES/CROWN MEDIA; *A CHRISTMAS REUNION*: HYBRID/ION



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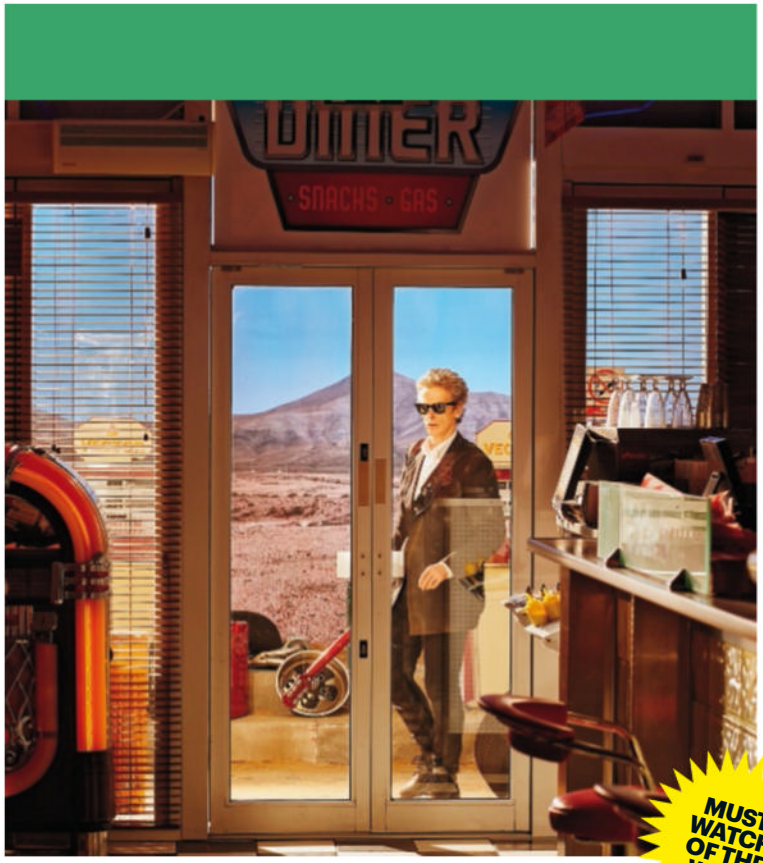
What to Watch

A DAY-TO-DAY GUIDE TO NOTABLE PROGRAMS* **BY RAY RAHMAN @RayRahman**



MUST WATCH OF THE WEEK

Season Finale

Doctor Who

SATURDAY, DEC. 5 | 9–10PM | BBC AMERICA

The terrific current season of the now-52-year-old time-travel show has found Peter Capaldi's guitar-shredding, sonic-sunglasses-wearing Doctor joining the pantheon of great Time Lords alongside those portrayed by David Tennant and Tom Baker. So it seems appropriate that the finale involves a trip back to the place where it all began for the Doc, his home planet of Gallifrey, for what executive producer Steven Moffat describes as a "huge, epic, big-scale, *Star Wars*"-style adventure. That's about all Moffat is prepared to say. The showrunner even declines to confirm or deny whether Jenna Coleman, who is leaving the show and whose character, Clara Oswald, seemed to die in the season's 10th episode, will feature in the finale. "I'm not talking about that, sorry," says Moffat. You know what? He doesn't sound sorry *at all.* —*Clark Collis*

MONDAY NOVEMBER 30

Series Debut

▶ The Great Holiday Baking Show

10–11PM | ABC

You may have heard of *The Great British Baking Show*, the U.K. competition series that's become a surprise international hit (and airs Stateside on PBS). This four-episode run comes from the same team but takes place in the U.S. and boasts a holiday theme. (The first task: cookies!) Like in the British version, bakers will be judged by "Royal Queen of Baking" Mary Berry, who'll join award-winning American pastry chef Johnny Iuzzini. And also like the original, this show will be more sugar than spice. "We're not out there to zing anyone [or] cause drama between the competitors," Iuzzini tells us. "People are baking for their families. It's lighthearted and heartwarming."

TUESDAY DECEMBER 1

▶ Grandfathered

8–8:30PM | FOX

Vanessa shows Sara how to take sexy pics on her phone. First tip: Stop using a landline.

▶ Vice Special Report: Countdown to Zero

9–10PM | HBO

In honor of World AIDS Day, Vice is airing a special on the latest breakthroughs in HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment.

Season Premiere

▶ The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills

9–10PM | BRAVO

Making a mockery of the word *real* since 2010.

Season Premiere

▶ Girlfriends' Guide to Divorce

10–11PM | BRAVO

Abby is offered a job at a site called SheShe. They picked that name because "HerHer" is pretty tough to say.

THE GREAT GONZO

▶ The Muppets

8–8:30PM | ABC

The episode—titled "Going, Going, Gonzo"—features Joseph Gordon-Levitt and Dave Grohl. And hopefully some great Gonzo stunts!

DOCTOR WHO: SIMON RIDGWAY/BBC AMERICA; *THE GREAT HOLIDAY BAKING SHOW*: MICHAEL BOURDILLON/ABC; *THE MUPPETS*: JOHN E. BARRETT/THE MUPPETS STUDIO/ABC

*TIMES ARE EASTERN STANDARD AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 2

Series Debut

RocketJump: The Show

STREAMING | HULU

After wrapping up their popular Web series *Video Game High School*, the founders of the RocketJump YouTube channel wanted to get back to making short films. They hit on the idea of a *Project Greenlight*-esque docuseries, with each episode detailing the creation of an individual short and culminating in the completed product's debut. The shorts range widely in format, sometimes changing genres within a single episode. "The premiere short starts as a Western, and it ends as a *Fast & Furious* movie," RocketJump cofounder Freddie Wong says. "That's probably one of the most fun ones we've ever done. We're doing a horse race like a car chase." *—Christian Holub*

Midseason Finale

Rosewood

8–9PM | FOX

Rosewood looks for a serial killer in Miami's art scene. The suspect swears he was framed!

Racing Extinction

9–11PM | DISCOVERY

The doc examines humankind's role in mass extinction. "I *said* I was sorry!" shouts the guy who ate the world's last dodo-bird burger.

Season Premiere

The Challenge: Battle of the Bloodlines

10–11PM | MTV

This year, contestants will have to outperform their own family members, just like Alec Baldwin.

THURSDAY DECEMBER 3

The Wiz Live!

8–11PM | NBC

Starring Queen Latifah, Uzo Aduba, Ne-Yo, and more, this live musical will be the thing taking over your Twitter feed tonight.

Series Debut

Food Porn

9–10PM | FYI

The Meatball Shop co-owner Michael Chernow hosts a show based on the popular Instragram hashtag. TV shows based on hashtags: signs that the dystopian future is here.

CMA Country Christmas

9–11PM | ABC

With performances by Martina McBride, LeAnn Rimes, Jewel, and more, this is like *The Wiz Live!*'s country-bumpkin cousin.

Top Chef

10–11PM | BRAVO

The chefs create menus inspired by L.A. A warm cup of eggsmog, anyone?

FRIDAY DECEMBER 4

Marc Maron: More Later

10–11PM | EPIX

Though he is a master of the podcast, there are entire episodes of Marc Maron's *WTF* that stumble because the host is unable to compartmentalize his neuroses long enough to fully engage with his guest. Maron runs into the same problem in his latest stand-up special, which finds him sputtering about familiar topics—his disastrous relationships, his cats, his struggle with healthy living—but often failing to emerge from that rage with a punchline. He tries to deflect flat bits with a meta gag about his judgmental "inner blogger," but he should take some of that self-aware criticism more seriously. He's still got some onstage tricks, but maybe Maron is better off in the garage. C+ *—Kyle Anderson*

SAT DEC. 5

Big Ten Championship

7–11PM | FOX

See two groups of Midwestern college students justify a semester of missed classes.

Ash vs Evil Dead

9–9:30PM | STARZ

Ash gains clarity after a drug-induced vision. (Don't try this at home, kids. In fact, shouldn't you already be in bed?!)

Tiny House Nation: 12 Tiny Homes of Christmas

9–10PM | FYI

Santa is gonna *hate* going down these chimneys.

SUNDAY DECEMBER 6

Sinatra 100: An All-Star Grammy Concert

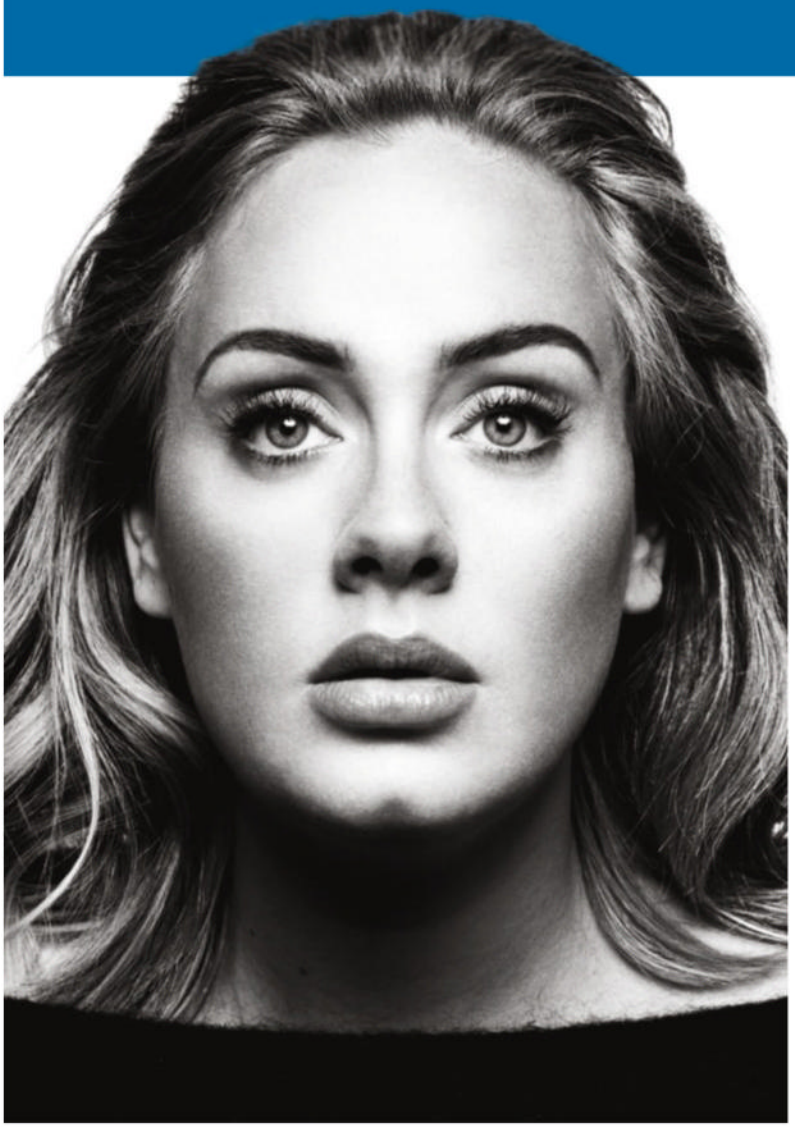
9–11PM | CBS

With Frank Sinatra's 100th birthday near (Dec. 12—mark your calendar!), an army of stars are descending upon Vegas for a tribute concert to Ol' Blue Eyes. Tony Bennett, Garth Brooks, Alicia Keys, Adam Levine, and Carrie Underwood are just some of the stars slated to perform in honor of the man they either knew personally or simply appreciated artistically. "Sinatra was a mentor, colleague, and dear friend of mine," says Bennett. "And he was the master of intimate singing." Adds Keys, "My grandfather introduced me to Frank Sinatra. I love hearing his songs, the phrasing, the innocence—the subtle depth that knocks you out. It brings me back to the lost art of 'the gentleman.'"

ROCKETJUMP: *THE SHOW*: TEMMA HANKIN/ROCKETJUMP/HULU; *THE WIZ LIVE!*: PAUL GILMORE/NBC; *MARC MARON: MORE LATER*: EPIX; SINATRA: SID AVERY/MPTV.NET

Music

EDITED BY **KEVIN O'DONNELL @ODtron**



Adele's *25*, Track by Track

On her first album in four years, the voice of the decade rebounds from heartbreak and finally finds happiness—but she still delivers plenty of weepers. EW breaks down every song on the most anticipated record of the year. **By EW Music Staff**

▷ 1. **"Hello"**
Give the girl props: She released the only song this year to make the world collectively sob. **A+**

▷ 2. **"Send My Love (To Your New Lover)"**
She's called this rollicking Max Martin-produced track "my f--- you song"—and it shows. Not since Angela Bassett torched her ex's car in *Waiting to Exhale* has revenge felt so good. **A–**

▷ 3. **"I Miss You"**
"Rolling in the Deep" co-writer Paul Epworth helps Adele reprise that song's booming groove, but this isn't a carbon copy. The pair spice things up with heaps of ghostly reverb, a hip-swiveling groove, and production trickery that calls to mind revered British dubstep wizard Burial. **B+**

▷ 4. **"When We Were Young"**
All the elements of a classic are here—production from studio whiz Ariel Rechtshaid, a co-write from Tobias Jesso Jr., even a riff that was composed on Philip Glass' old piano—but it doesn't quite click. Thankfully, Adele saves this ballad with a nostalgic tale about the enduring power of friendship. **B**

▷ 5. **"Remedy"**
This perfectly plain paean to devotion showcases her pipes and piano and nothing more. And her straightforward lyrics ("Your love, it is my truth/And I will always love you") would definitely get Dolly's stamp of approval. **A–**

▷ 6. **"Water Under the Bridge"**
Happiness sounds good on Adele. She evokes the empowering vibe of Carly Simon's "Let the River Run" (you know it

XL RECORDS/COLUMBIA

NOTEWORTHY

Carly Simon has put an end to one of pop's biggest mysteries: The songwriter revealed that her 1972 classic "You're So Vain" is partially about actor Warren Beatty. **Rita Wilson** will release her first album of original material in early 2016.

from *Working Girl*) on this anthemic love letter to her partner, Simon Konecki, and their son, Angelo. **A+**

7. "River Lea"
Producer Brian "Danger Mouse" Burton is a master at setting dark, dramatic moods—and Adele's brooding lyrics about leaving your past behind fit perfectly. Driven by a gritty gospel-organ groove, it's the most experimental song here. **A**

8. "Love in the Dark"
She sharply chronicles a doomed romance with a vocal performance that lives up to her reputation as pop's heartbreak queen—but those swells of syrupy-thick strings obscure her poetic power. **B**

9. "Million Years Ago"
Part French chanson, part acoustic campfire ditty, this track sees Adele singing a whopper of a weeper about missed opportunities and lost innocence. Just try not to cry when she croons, "I miss my friends/I miss my mother/I miss it when life was a party to be thrown/But that was a million years ago." **B+**

10. "All I Ask"
Another bawler of a ballad, co-written with a team that included Bruno Mars, though this one veers on the maudlin side. **B–**

11. "Sweetest Devotion"
The strummy album closer is a nice throwback to Adele's humble girl-and-a-guitar beginnings. And the chorus offers the sort of chest-thumping climax she can pull off in her sleep. **B+**

MORE ON EW.COM
Read EW critic Leah Greenblatt's review of *25* online at **ew.com/adelereview**

▼ (From left) Kylie Minogue, Toni Braxton, Sharon Jones, Pat Monahan, and RuPaul

The Best and Worst New Christmas Albums

From an excellent new soul album to a cartoonish collection, EW recommends the season's essential stocking stuffers—and the ones you should regift. By Eric Renner Brown and Dana Rose Falcone

RuPaul
Slay Belles

No tea, no shade: The drag queen does hilariously fierce jams like "Merry Christmas, Mary" and "Jingle Dem Bells."
GIFT OR REGIFT?
Gift. Because everyone needs at least one disco-themed holiday party (or a good gag present).

Kylie Minogue
Kylie Christmas

A sugary mix of originals and classics, plus improbably solid duets with late-night talk-show host James Corden and Iggy Pop.
GIFT OR REGIFT?
Gift. A glittery gem for the pop lover in your life.

Sharon Jones & the Dap-Kings
It's a Holiday Soul Party

The soul singer and her band score with ace originals like "Ain't No Chimneys in the Projects."
GIFT OR REGIFT?
The best holiday album of 2015. Definitely **gift**.

My Little Pony
It's a Pony Kind of Christmas

Equine-ified takes on holiday faves, with high-pitched vocals and frequent references to the magical world of Equestria.
GIFT OR REGIFT?
Unless there's a brony on your list, **regift.**

The Braxtons
Braxton Family Christmas

R&B singer Toni reunites with her sisters for this soulful set of staples, like a powerful a cappella version of "O Holy Night."
GIFT OR REGIFT?
It's been nearly 20 years since Toni joined her siblings on an album. **Gift.**

Train
Christmas in Tahoe

With slick pop arrangements, Train cover the modern canon (John Lennon's "Happy Xmas [War Is Over]") and do a few originals.
GIFT OR REGIFT?
Regift. *Tahoe* is as treacly as canned cranberry sauce.

ILLUSTRATION BY **JOHN UELAND**

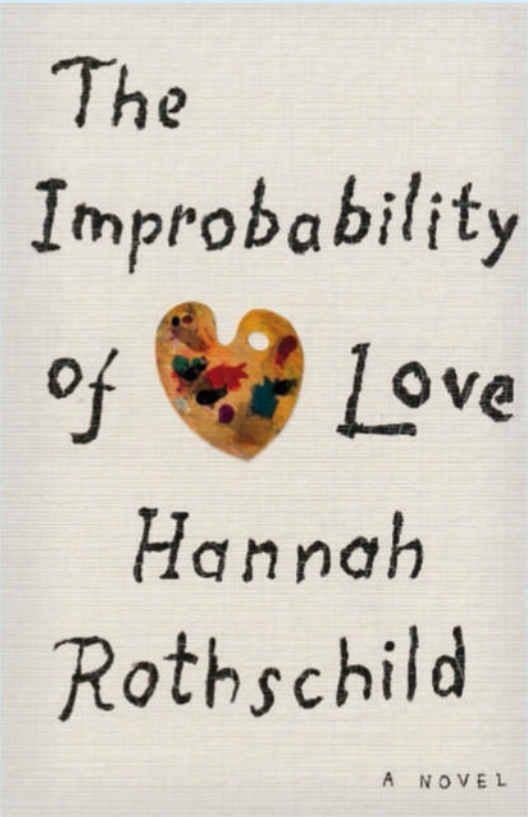
MINOGUE: NEVILLE HOPWOOD/GETTY IMAGES; BRAXTON: ANATOLY ZHDANOV/KOMMERSANT PHOTO/GETTY IMAGES; JONES: PAUL R. GIUNTA/GETTY IMAGES; MONAHAN: DAVID BECKER; RUPAUL: LOGO NETWORK

Books

EDITED BY **TINA JORDAN @EWTinaJordan**

BETWEEN THE LINES

Dear Pope Francis, the Pontiff's first children's book, will come out next March. **@StephenKing** tweeted, "Hating all Muslims for what happened in Paris is like hating all Christians because of the gay-hating Westboro Baptist Church."



The Improbability of Love

BY	PAGES	GENRE	REVIEW BY
Hannah Rothschild	406	Novel	Leah Greenblatt @*Leahbats*

A PICTURE IS worth a thousand plot points in Hannah Rothschild's bright, champagne-fizzy satire of modern romance, human avarice, and the booming international art market. The book's namesake—and the object of nearly every character's obsession or transgression—is an unassuming 18th-century pastoral by the doomed French rococo artist Jean-Antoine Watteau. (He was real; this particular painting is fiction.) Made for a beautiful muse who never returned his affections, *The Improbability of Love* went on to live a singularly starry life after Watteau's death—spending three centuries in the gilded company of philosophers, courtesans, and kings before landing incognito and abandoned in the back of a London junk shop.

It's there—buried behind piles of moldy hardbacks and mismatched tea sets—that a young aspiring chef named Annie McDee plucks it out on a whim and purchases it from the shop's indifferent proprietor for 75 pounds. Reeling from a bad breakup and distracted by the demands of her terminally tipsy mother, Annie props the picture in her living room and pretty much forgets about it. But when a museum docent gets a glimpse and realizes that *Love* may be more than a cheap reproduction, a race to possess the lost masterpiece begins. Billionaire sheikhs, society doyennes, self-absorbed academics, and exiled Russian oligarchs circle the prize, though the most dangerous player may be the one who held it last: a powerful art dealer whose nearly priceless collection has its roots in a mysterious and very shady past.

> "ROTHSCHILD KNOWS HER SUBJECT FIRSTHAND; SHE HAS SPENT DECADES MOVING IN THE RAREFIED CIRCLES DEPICTED HERE."

Rothschild knows her subject firsthand; she comes from one of the world's wealthiest families and has spent decades moving in the rarefied circles depicted here. That gives the novel its insidery spark and smooths over some of her sloppier narrative tricks. (Dear Annie: When your voicemail is flooded with urgent messages, *check them*.) The best of many sharply drawn protagonists may be the painting itself, an endearingly anthropomorphized diva slyly unfurling its own storied history—and gazing down from its canvas perch on the silly flesh-and-blood mortals who continue to fight and chase and cheat and love, against all improbability. **B+** E

OPENING LINE "Though she often passed Bernoff and Son, Annie had never been tempted to explore the junk shop; there was something uninviting about the dirty window...."

KEY E = E-BOOK C = CD A = AUDIBLE

Mary-Louise Parker
My Letters to Men

In her feisty, funny new memoir, **Dear Mr. You**—composed entirely of letters to the men in her life—the actress muses about everything from her book-loving father to cabdriver-induced rage to her love of black envelopes. **By Tina Jordan**

Why did you decide to tell your story this way?
I was lucky enough to write for *Esquire* for a number of years. One of the things they asked me to do was an appreciation about men. It came out in the form of a letter. I really loved writing it that way—loved being able to have the mundane smashed up against something poetic. I never forgot about it.

Your dad is the thread that connects all these letters. How come?
My father is the reason why I write, why I love words, why I love books. He and I would go to bookstores, and he took me to the library all the time. Later in his life we sent poems back and forth in the mail to each other. There's so much of him in me—I think the things that people like about me are my father. And the things that people don't like about me are also my father.

This isn't a score-settling book. Anyone who's looking for venom directed at old boyfriends won't find it.
I think it's a bunch of thank-you notes, really. There *is* a piece in the book that's darker, that details difficult relationships. But I'm grateful for those experiences, and they are part of a bigger conversation I had with myself in which I asked, "Why was I complicit in that?" and "What did I do to conjure that?"

You don't always come off very well. In one letter, you lash out at a cabdriver.
I'm not the hero of every chapter. I don't think it would be an honest book if I were.

Were there letters that didn't make it into the book?
Oh, so many. And there were letters that I wanted to write but couldn't. I would have loved to have written letters to my brothers, but I would never want to do anything that would put them in any kind of uncomfortable position. They're so supportive of me.

How do you make time to write? You work and have two kids.
I turn on the TV super loud and I say, "Everyone come crawl on me and drop food on me." It's good if the doorbell can go off and the phone can ring. If the dog pees on the rug, that's great too.

You write lots of letters in real life. What does your stationery look like?
I have white cards with black lettering at the bottom, and my name is oversized. And the envelopes are black, so I always have to have metallic pens on hand. I like black envelopes.

Will you write another book?
I hope so. I've always written—I wrote tiny books when I was a little girl. I hope I finish something else again. I like that feeling of holding the book in my hands. Knowing that it was positive, and about gratitude—well, I can go to sleep at night feeling good about that.

PARKER: MELANIE DUNEA

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The Bullseye

If we go back in time, can we stop this *Memento* remake from ever happening?

Oxford Dictionaries names "Face with Tears of Joy" the 2015 word of the year, beating out "on fleek," "lumbersexual," and "Caradelevingne."

Lindsay Lohan is at work on a new film, *The Shadow Within*, named after attendance at movie theaters once it comes out.

Pierce Brosnan criticizes *Spectre*, which is totally legitimate since he's an expert on bad Bond movies.

Say "Hello" to your next religious experience.

Once Upon a Time creators making summer-camp horror series, yet if history tells us anything, they'll still find a way to introduce Mulan.

The best part of the *Zoolander 2* trailer: Eyebrow Edition

Jessica Jones' Kilgrave: the scariest thing in the Marvel Universe since salmonella hit the Avengers' shawarma joint

The best part of the *Zoolander 2* trailer: No-Eyebrow Edition

They say it's the year's best dinosaur movie without Bryce Dallas Howard running in heels.

We'll gladly ease on down any road that leads us to Uzo Aduba as Glinda.

Snooki to flip ~~cup~~ Jersey houses on new reality show.

The beauty of 2015: There's a boy in a Moschino Barbie commercial. The horror of 2015: There's a Moschino Barbie.

Sheldon, Amy to have sex on *The Big Bang Theory*, in an episode we're calling "The 'I Don't Need to See That!' Polarization."

Our favorite *Carol* since the Bradys

Our favorite friend of *Carol* since Alice

E! cans *The Soup* after 22 seasons. (Sources disagree on whether it had expired.)

Spoiler alert from 1972: Carly Simon says the second verse of "You're So Vain" is about Warren Beatty!

Harry Styles hints he's had at least one song written about him. "LOL," says Warren Beatty.

FRIDAY THE 13TH: JOHN P. JOHNSON; ADELE: MARK DAVIS/WIREIMAGE.COM; MARVEL'S JESSICA JONES: MYLES ARONOWITZ/NETFLIX; THE WIZ LIVE!: PAUL GILMORE/NBC; NICOLE "SNOOKI" POLIZZI: ROB LOUD/GETTY IMAGES; STYLES: DAVID M. BENETT/GETTY IMAGES; BEATTY: SILVER SCREEN COLLECTION/GETTY IMAGES; SIMON: ED CARAEFF/GETTY IMAGES; ROONEY MARA IN *CAROL*: WILSON WEBB; CATE BLANCHETT IN *CAROL*: THE WEINSTEIN COMPANY; *THE BIG BANG THEORY*: SONJA FLEMING/CBS; *THE GOOD DINOSAUR*: PIXAR; BROSNAN: STEVE GRANITZ/WIREIMAGE.COM; EMPTY THEATER: HEATH KORVOLA/GETTY IMAGES; *MEMENTO*: DANNY ROTHENBERG

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